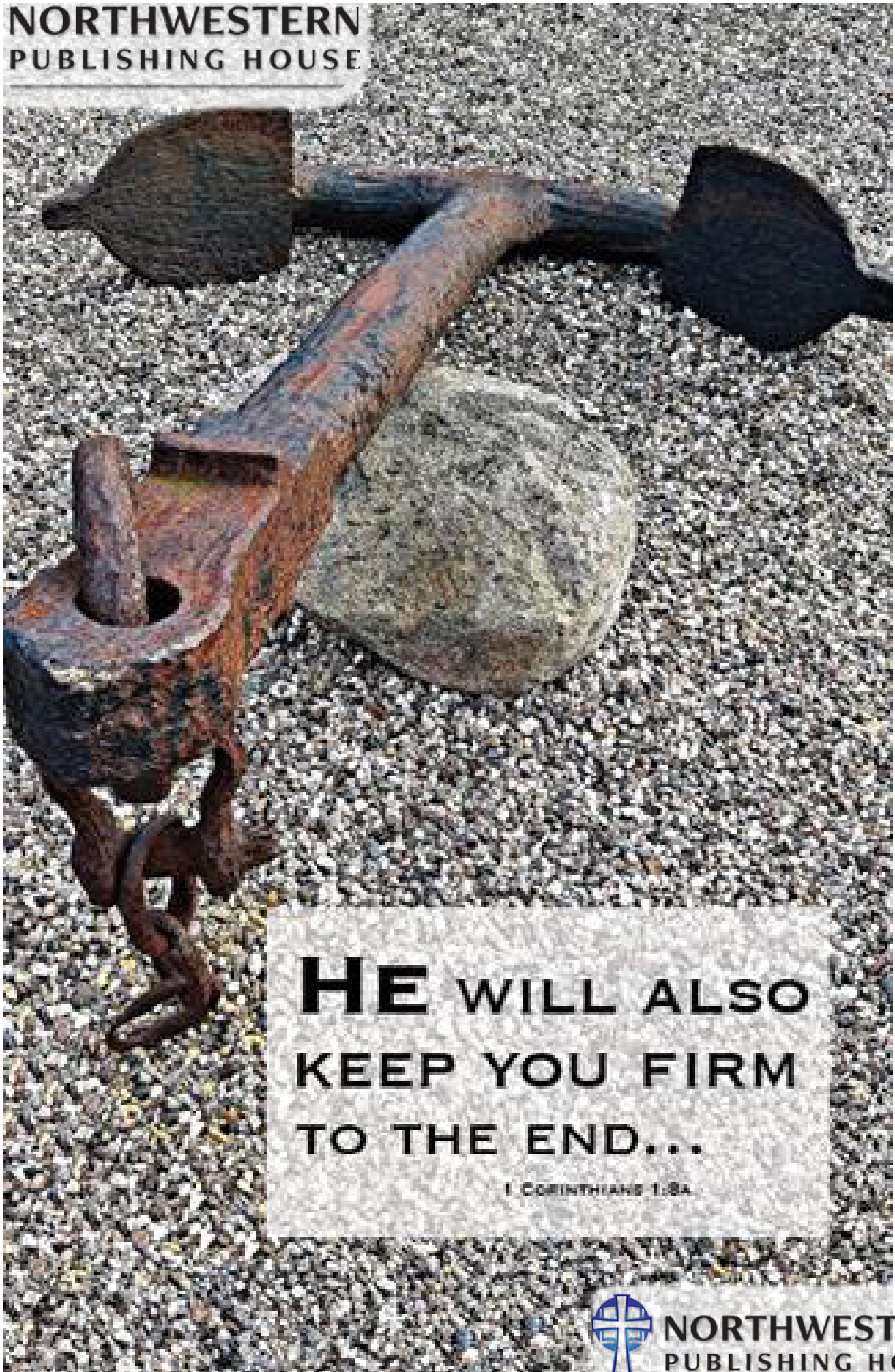




**NORTHWESTERN
PUBLISHING HOUSE**

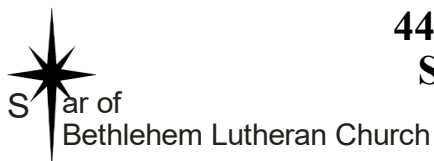


**HE WILL ALSO
KEEP YOU FIRM
TO THE END...**

1 CORINTHIANS 1:8A



**NORTHWESTERN
PUBLISHING HOUSE**



4465 South Blosser Road
Santa Maria, CA 93455
Office: 805-937-0339
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Pastor Michael Foley

Worship Service

Sunday, December 3, 2023 10:00 a.m.

First Sunday of ADVENT

Theme of the day: Eagerly looking forward to Jesus' second advent, we join in the excitement of the Palm Sunday crowd, making the preparations God instructs and joining our voices to shout: "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" This Sunday, we clearly proclaim the purpose for Jesus' coming. His coming brings salvation.

WELCOME

A warm welcome to our friends and visitors! Star of Bethlehem Lutheran Church is eager to share with you the blessings of its Christ-centered ministry. If you are a new or long-time resident of the Central Coast looking for a church home, we invite you to meet with us at the close of this worship service or at your convenience. All are welcome to stay for refreshments in the fellowship hall.

Families are encouraged to worship together. If you need to step out with your children, the service can be seen and heard in the fellowship hall or narthex area. Feel free to enter and return at any time.

OUR MISSION

Our congregation exists for the purpose of "HOLDING OUT THE WORD OF LIFE." This is accomplished by faithfully preserving and proclaiming all of God's inerrant word, and administering the Sacraments as they were instituted by Christ.

OPENING HYMN: # 313 “Hark the Glad Sound!”

♪ **Hark the glad sound! The Savior comes,
the Savior promised long;
let ev’ry heart prepare a throne and ev’ry voice a song.**

**He comes the pris’ners to release, in Satan’s bondage held.
the gates of brass before him burst, the iron fetters yield.**

**He comes the broken heart to bind, the bleeding soul to cure,
and with the treasures of his grace
to enrich the humble poor.**

Please stand for last verse:

**Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace,
your welcome shall proclaim,
and heav’n’s eternal arches ring
with your beloved name.**

Minister: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and
the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

Congregation: **And also with you.**

The Call to Repentance

M: A voice was saying, “Cry out!”

C: **And I said, “What shall I cry out?”**

M: All flesh is grass,

C: **and all its beauty is like a wildflower in the countryside.**

M: Grass withers, flowers fade, when the breath of the LORD blows
on them.

C: **Yes, the people are grass.**

M: Grass withers, flowers fade,

C: **but the word of our God endures forever.**

C: **Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful,
and that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words, and
actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good.
For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity.
But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior
Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.**

Introduction is played (Melody of # 316)

♪ **O Jesus, Lamb of God, you are
My comfort and my guiding star;
I come, a sinner, trustingly
And bring my many sins with me.**

M: God, our heavenly Father, has been merciful to us and has given his only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: *(Spoken)* **Amen**

Please be seated.

ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING INTROIT

♪ **Come here, my friends, lift up your eyes,
and see what in the manger lies.
Who is this child, so young and fair?
It is the Christ Child lying there.**

M: The darkness of sin and unbelief are shattered by the light of the Gospel. The **Prophecy Candle** gives us the first flicker of hope as we watch for the coming of the Lord.

C: **Watch! Be alert and pray, because you do not know when the time will come.** *(Mark 13:33)*

The Prophecy Candle is lit.

♪ **Welcome to earth, O noble Guest,
through whom the sinful world is blest!
You came to share my misery
that you might share your joy with me.**



M: May the light of these candles call to mind the glorious light of the Gospel, shining in the birth of our Savior. May his grace enlighten our lives, both now and forever.

**He who has clean hands and a pure heart,*
he will receive blessing from God his Savior.**

Refrain

**Lift up your heads, O you gates;
be lifted up, you ancient doors,*
that the King of glory may come in.**

**Who is this King of glory?*
The LORD strong and mighty,
the LORD mighty in battle.**

**Lift up your heads, O you gates;
lift them up, you ancient doors,*
that the King of glory may come in.**

**Who is he, this King of glory?*
The LORD Almighty—he is the King of glory.**

**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.**

Refrain

VERSE OF THE DAY:

M: Alleluia. The one who testifies about these things says, “Yes, I am coming soon.” Alleluia. (*Revelation 22:20*)

**C: ♪ Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
These words are written that we may believe
that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

GOSPEL LESSON: Mark 11:1-10

As they approached Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, on the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples ²and told them, “Go into the village ahead of you. As soon as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, on which no one has ever sat. Untie it and bring it here. ³If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ say, ‘The Lord needs it, and he will send it back here without delay.’ ”

⁴They left and found a colt on the street, tied at a door; and they untied it. ⁵Some who were standing there asked them, “What are you doing, untying that colt?” ⁶The disciples answered them just as Jesus had instructed them, and the men let them go.

⁷They brought the colt to Jesus, threw their garments on it, and Jesus sat on it. ⁸Many people spread their garments on the road. Others spread branches that they had cut from the fields. ⁹Those who went in front and those who followed were crying out,

Hosanna!

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!

¹⁰Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!

Hosanna in the highest!

HYMN: # 314 “O Savior, Rend the Heavens Wide”

**♪ O Savior, rend the heavens wide;
come down, come down with mighty stride.
Unlock the gates, the doors break down;
unbar the way to heaven’s crown.**

**O Morning Star, O radiant Dawn,
when will we sing your morning song?
Come, Son of God! Without your light
we grope in dread and gloom of night.**

**Sin’s dreadful doom upon us lies;
grim death looms fierce before our eyes.
Come, lead us with your mighty hand
from exile to our promised land.**

**There shall we all our praises bring
and sing to you, our Savior-King;
there shall we laud you and adore forever and forevermore.**

MESSAGE: Isaiah 64:1-9

**Oh, that you would rip open the heavens and come down.
Mountains then would quake because of your presence.
²As fire ignites stubble and as fire makes water boil,
make your name known to your adversaries.
Then nations would quake in your presence.
³You did amazing things that we did not expect.
You came down. Mountains quaked because of your presence.
⁴From ancient times no one has heard.
No ear has understood.
No eye has seen any god except you,
who goes into action for the one who waits for him.
⁵You meet anyone who joyfully practices righteousness,
who remembers you by walking in your ways!
But you were angry because we sinned.
We have remained in our sins for a long time.
Can we still be saved?
⁶All of us have become like something unclean,
and all our righteous acts are like a filthy cloth.
All of us have withered like a leaf,
and our guilt carries us away like the wind.
⁷There is no one who calls on your name,
who rouses himself to take hold of you.
So you hid your face from us.
You made us melt by the power of our guilt.
⁸But now, LORD, you are our father.
We are the clay, and you are our potter.
All of us are the work of your hand.
⁹Do not be angry, LORD, without limit.
Do not remember our guilt forever.
Please look closely.
All of us are your people.**

NICENE CREED

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

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the
Father. Through him all things were made.**

For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, and became fully human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate. He suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

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

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

OFFERING

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

M: Eternal Father, throughout the centuries you repeated and affirmed your promise to send the offspring of the woman to crush the serpent's head. Through your prophets of old, you continually directed the eyes of your people to the advent of their Savior.

C: **We praise you, O Lord, for keeping your promise and sending your Son to destroy the works of the devil.**

M: As we prepare to celebrate the birth of our King, use your mighty Word to shatter our pride and to rouse us from spiritual slumber and apathy.

C: **Move us to take to heart the words of John: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."**

M: You sent your Son to redeem us from sin. Let this good news be our joy and strength. Use it to cheer the lonely, encourage the fearful, and give hope to the despairing. In these days before Christmas, spare us from the stress of deadlines and the frenzy of commercialism.

C: **Fill our lives with the message of your peace and the music of your grace.**

M: Direct our eyes not only to the manger but also to the skies, where

we will see your Son coming again, not as a lowly child but as the Lord of lords.

C: Lift up our hearts in joyful anticipation of that day.

M: Come quickly, Lord Jesus, in your grace, in your power, and in your glory.

C: Come, Lord Jesus! Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

C: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

THE HOLY SACRAMENT

Holy Communion, will be celebrated in today's service. The Bible teaches us that Jesus offers us his body and blood for the forgiveness of our sins in the Lord's Supper. The Bible also instructs us that receiving the Lord's Supper together is a public expression of our complete "oneness," or unity of faith.

Because the Lord's Supper is an expression of our unity in faith, we invite to the Lord's Supper only those who have expressed that unity with us through membership in our congregation or one of our sister congregations in the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS), or our sister church body, the ELS.

If you are a guest from another Christian church, we kindly ask that you simply refrain from participation in our celebration of the Lord's Supper today. We don't want to be presumptuous and put you in the position of declaring your agreement with our beliefs before you have had a chance to learn more.

M: The Lord be with you.

C: ♪ And also with you.

M: Lift up your hearts.

C: ♪ We lift them up to the Lord.

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

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

M: Praise to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In love he has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. Through his holy prophets, he promised a King to bring light to those living in darkness and in the shadow of death.

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

♪ **Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts.
The whole earth is full of your glory.
You are my God, and I will exalt you.
I will give you thanks, for you have become my salvation.
Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts.
The whole earth is full of your glory.**

The Words of Institution

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

C: ♪ **Amen.**

♪ **O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us.
O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us.
O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world
grant us your peace. Amen.**

COMMUNION HYMN: # 826 “From God Can Nothing Move Me”

♪ **From God can nothing move me; he will not step aside
but gently will reprove me and be my constant guide.
He stretches out his hand in evening and in morning,
my life with grace adorning wherever I may stand.**

**When those whom I regarded as trustworthy and sure
have long from me departed, God’s grace shall still endure.
He rescues me from sin and breaks the chains that bind me.
I leave death’s fear behind me; his peace I have within.**

**Each day at his good pleasure God's gracious will is done.
He sent his greatest treasure in Jesus Christ, his Son.
He ev'ry gift imparts; the bread of earth and heaven
are by his kindness given. Praise him with thankful hearts!**

**Yet even though I suffer the world's unpleasantness,
and though the days grow rougher and bring me great distress,
that day of bliss divine, which knows no end or measure,
and Christ, who is my pleasure, forever shall be mind.**

**For thus the Father willed it, who fashioned us from clay;
and his own Son fulfilled it and brought eternal day.
The Spirit now has come, to us true faith has given;
he leads us home to heaven. O praise the Three in One!**

Thanksgiving

Please stand.

**♪ Thank the Lord and sing his praise.
Tell ev'ryone what he has done.
Let all who seek the Lord rejoice
and proudly bear his name.
He renews his promises and leads
his people forth in joy
With shouts of thanksgiving.
Alleluia! Alleluia!**

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

C: **♪ Amen**

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

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.

C: ♪ Amen. Amen. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN: # 522 “Beautiful Savior”

♪ **Beautiful Savior, King of creation,
Son of God and Son of Man!
Truly I’d love thee, truly I’d serve thee,
light of my soul, my joy, my crown.**

**Fair are the meadows, fair are the woodlands,
robed in flow’rs of blooming spring;
Jesus is fairer, Jesus is purer,
he makes our sorr’wing spirit sing.**

**Fair is the sunshine, fair is the moonlight,
bright the sparkling stars on high;
Jesus shines brighter, Jesus shines purer
than all the angels in the sky.**

**Beautiful Savior, Lord of the nations,
Son of God and Son of Man!
Glory and honor, praise, adoration
now and forevermore be thine!**



ANNOUNCEMENTS

ALTAR FLOWERS are given to the glory of God by the Obergs.

PRAYERS: Remember to pray for: Shawn Lozano, John Velasques, little Elias, Dennis Douglas, Bob Ward, George Caravana, Molly Webb (and brother, Jim), Helen Marten, Doug Ward, Kathy Jones, Art Amarillas, Roberta Gowin, Melinda Brown, Alice Taubman, Monica, Louise Perry, Rylan Downs, Sam Daugherty, Jeff Brown, Aaron Taubman, Judy Washburn, and Marlene Washburn.

THIS WEEK

Tuesday ESL (English as a Second Language), **6:00 p.m.**
Thursday Bible Class, **10:00 a.m.**
ESL, **6:00 p.m.**
Sunday Bible Class & Sunday School, **9:00 a.m.**
Worship, **10:00 a.m.**
Living Nativity, **5:00-6:00 p.m.**
Las Posadas, **6:00 p.m.**

COMING UP

Christmas Eve - Candlelight Service, 7:00 p.m.
Christmas Day - Festival Worship, 10:00 a.m.

STAR CHURCH DIRECTORY: Please update your personal information as it changes (either online or blue sheets in narthex).

To view and use the directory online, go to:

members.instantchurchdirectory.com

Follow the prompts under “Sign In” to “Create a login now.”

To view and use the directory on your smartphone:

download the App for “Instant Church Directory”

*** You will need to use your e-mail address as listed in our directory to create a log-in the first time you use the directory online and via the mobile app.

PERSONAL PREPARATION FOR HOLY COMMUNION

Q: What does God tell me about myself in his holy Word?

A: He says that I am a sinner and deserve only his punishment.

Q: What should I do if I am not aware of my sins or am not troubled by them?

A: I should examine myself according to the Ten Commandments and ask how well I have carried out my responsibilities as a husband or wife or single person, as a parent or child, an employer or employee, a teacher or student. Have I loved God with all my heart, gladly heard his Word, and patiently endured affliction? Have I been disobedient, proud, or unforgiving? Have I been selfish, lazy, envious, or quarrelsome? Have I lied or deceived, taken something not mine, or given anyone a bad name? Have I abused my body or permitted indecent thoughts to linger in my mind? Have I failed to do what is right and good?

Q: When I realize that I have sinned against God and deserve his punishment, what should I do?

A: I will confess before God all my sins, those which I remember as well as those of which I am unaware. I will pray to God for his mercy and forgiveness.

Q: How do I receive his gracious forgiveness?

A: His Word assures me that Jesus led a pure and holy life for me and died on the cross for me to pay the full price for all my sins. Through faith in Jesus, I have been clothed in my Savior's perfect righteousness and holiness.

Q: What further assurance do I have that Jesus is mine and I am his?

A: In Holy Communion he gives me his body and blood together with the bread and wine as a truly life-giving food and drink to unite me with him and my fellow believers. By means of this sacrament, Jesus not only forgives my sins but sweeps away all my doubts about his love for me, gives me his own strength to live a God-pleasing life, and grants me a joyful foretaste of heaven.

Q: How can I be sure that I receive all these blessings in the Lord's Supper?

A: I have his own word spoken as his last will and testament on the night before he died. There he tells me: "Take and eat; this is my body. Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of me."

Q: How will I respond to this priceless gift from Jesus?

A: I will daily thank and praise him for his love to me. With his help I will fight temptation, do my best to correct whatever wrongs I have done, and serve him and those around me with love and good works.

Lord Jesus, with joy and gratitude I now come to your table to receive the precious food of your life-giving body and blood. May it strengthen me to remain in you as you remain in me, so that I bear much fruit in devoted service to you and in acts of kindness to others. Amen.

**... our salvation is nearer now
than when we first believed.**



- Romans 13:11