



“Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

+ *Matthew 28:20 (NKJV)*

THE ASCENSION OF OUR LORD (OBSERVED)

May 16, 2021

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

“I’ll see you soon!” How often have we found these words on our own lips as we leave family and friends, with certainty that time together will soon be had again.

“I’ll see you soon!” says Jesus as He departs and ascends into heaven. And though it has not been hours or days or even weeks, but nearly two thousand years, we still hold to the certainty of His promise that we shall see Him again soon at His time.

Until that day, though, we are wise to not stay looking up into the sky, as the disciples began to do so long ago. Rather, we heed His mission to make disciples and keep ourselves prepared for that day. Even as we long to see Him soon, we know that Jesus is enough for us every day, and we take comfort in the fact that our ascended Lord Jesus remains present with us now, in this life, even amid troubles and trials.

We hold on to His promises by the faith given, and we anticipate that joyful day when He will come again in the same way He was taken up into heaven.



Yours in Christ Jesus,
+Pastor Griebenaw

*“The Ascension” by Benjamin West, 1801,
Courtesy of the Denver Art Museum*

Pastor’s Phone: 760-679-3699

Pastor’s Email: pastor@gracelutheranelcentro.org

✠ DIVINE SERVICE, SETTING THREE ✠

HYMN OF INVOCATION: Father, We Praise Thee

LSB 875

1 Fa - ther, we praise Thee, now the night is o - ver, Ac - tive and
2 Mon - arch of all things, fit us for Thy man - sions; Ban - ish our
△ 3 All - ho - ly Fa - ther, Son, and e - qual Spir - it, Trin - i - ty
watch - ful, stand we all be - fore Thee; Sing - ing, we of - fer
weak - ness, health and whole - ness send - ing; Bring us to heav - en,
bless - ed, send us Thy sal - va - tion; Thine is the glo - ry,
prayer and med - i - ta - tion: Thus we a - dore Thee.
where Thy saints u - nit - ed Joy with - out end - ing.
gleam - ing and re - sound - ing Through all cre - a - tion.

Text and tune: Public Domain

Stand – The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

LSB 184

- P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit. *Matthew 28:19b; [18:20]*
C **Amen.**
- P** Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness. *[Hebrews 10:22]*
- P** Our help is in the name of the Lord,
C **who made heaven and earth.** *Psalm 124:8*
- P** I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,
C **and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.** *Psalm 32:5*

Kneel (or remain standing) — Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

- P** Almighty God, our maker and redeemer, we poor sinners confess unto You that we are by nature sinful and unclean and that we have sinned against You by thought, word, and deed. Wherefore we flee for refuge to Your infinite mercy, seeking and imploring Your grace for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- C** **O most merciful God, who has given Your only-begotten Son to die for us, have mercy upon us and for His sake grant us remission of all our sins; and by Your Holy Spirit increase in us true knowledge of You and of Your will and true obedience to Your Word, to the end that by Your grace we may come to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**
- P** Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy upon us and has given His only Son to die for us and for His sake forgives us all our sins. To those who believe on His name He gives power to become the children of God and has promised them His Holy Spirit. He that believes and is baptized shall be saved.
- Grant this, Lord, unto us all. *Mark 16:16; John 1:12*
- C** **Amen.**

Stand

SERVICE OF THE WORD

INTROIT

Psalm 110:1, 4-5; antiphon: Psalm 47:5

The pastor and congregation chant responsively. The antiphon is chanted by the pastor before and after the psalm.



(Antiphon) God has gone up | with a shout,*
the LORD with the sound of a | trumpet.

¹ The LORD says to my Lord: “Sit at My | right hand,*
until I make Your enemies Your | footstool.”

⁴ **The LORD has sworn and will not | change His mind,***
“You are a priest forever after the order of Mel- | chizedek.”

⁵ The Lord is at Your | right hand;*
He will shatter kings on the day | of His wrath.

**Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*
and to the Holy | Spirit;
as it was in the be- | ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.**

The antiphon is repeated.

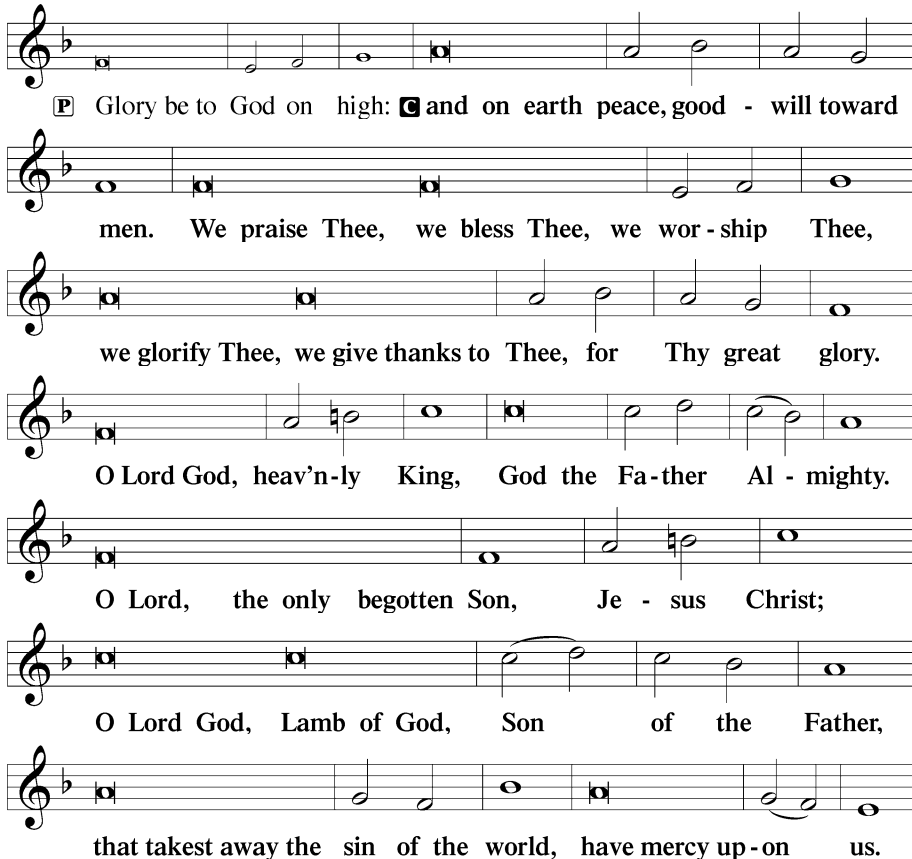
KYRIE

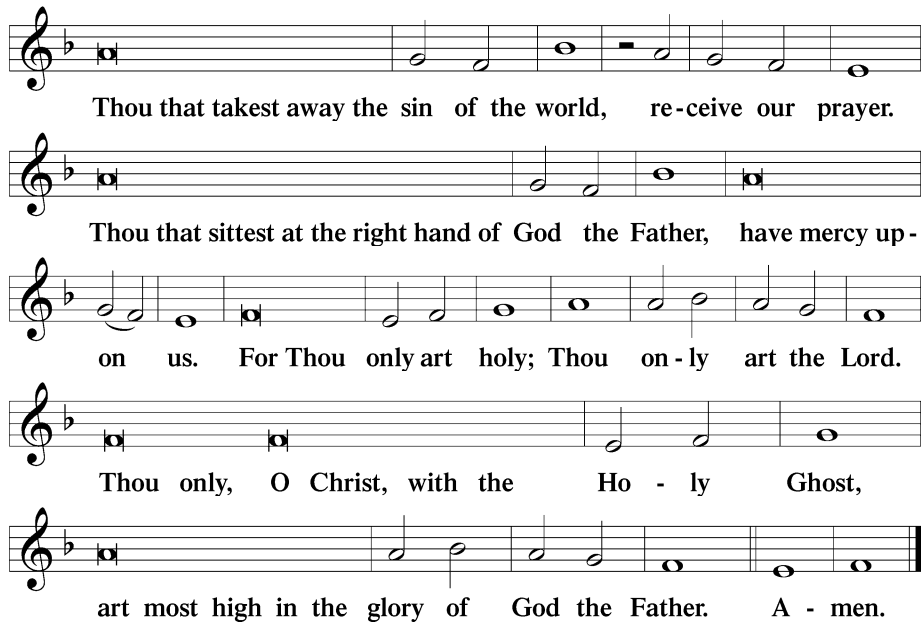
Mark 10:47



GLORIA IN EXCELSIS

Luke 2:14; John 1:29





Thou that takest away the sin of the world, re-ceive our prayer.

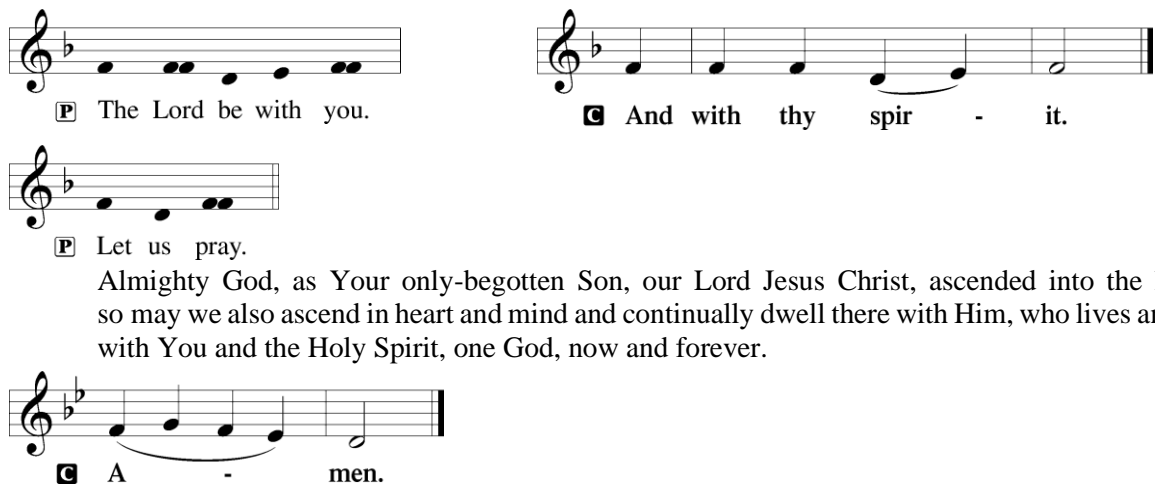
Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy up-

on us. For Thou only art holy; Thou on-ly art the Lord.

Thou only, O Christ, with the Ho-ly Ghost,

art most high in the glory of God the Father. A-men.

SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY



P The Lord be with you. **C** And with thy spir-it.

P Let us pray.
 Almighty God, as Your only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, ascended into the heavens, so may we also ascend in heart and mind and continually dwell there with Him, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C A-men.

Sit

FIRST READING

Acts 1:1-11

P The First Reading is from the Acts of the Apostles, chapter one.

¹In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, ²until the day when He was taken up, after He had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom He had chosen. ³To them He presented Himself alive after His suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.

⁴And while staying with them He ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, “which,” He said, “you heard from Me; ⁵for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

⁶So when they had come together, they asked Him, “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” ⁷He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by His own authority. ⁸But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” ⁹And when He had said these things, as they were looking on, He was lifted up, and a cloud took Him out of their sight. ¹⁰And while they were gazing into heaven as He went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, ¹¹and said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw Him go into heaven.”

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

GRADUAL

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

The pastor and congregation chant responsively by half-verse.



Christ has risen | from the dead.*

[God the Father] has crowned Him with glory and | honor.

He has given Him dominion over the works | of His hands;*

He has put all things un- | der His feet.

EPISTLE

Ephesians 1:15–23

P The Epistle is from Ephesians, chapter one.

¹⁵For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, ¹⁶I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, ¹⁷that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him, ¹⁸having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which He has called you, what are the riches of His glorious inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹and what is the immeasurable greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His great might ²⁰that He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. ²²And He put all things under His feet and gave Him as head over all things to the church, ²³which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Stand

ALLELUIA & VERSE

Romans 6:9; Matthew 28:20b (NKJV)



C Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia.

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

Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Alleluia.

The alleluias are repeated.

HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 24:44–53

P The Holy Gospel according to Saint Luke, the twenty-fourth chapter.



C Glo - ry be to Thee, O Lord.

⁴⁴Then He said to them, “These are My words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.”

⁴⁵Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, ⁴⁶and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, ⁴⁷and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸You are witnesses of these things.

⁴⁹And behold, I am sending the Promise of My Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”

⁵⁰Then He led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up His hands He blessed them. ⁵¹While He blessed them, He parted from them and was carried up into heaven. ⁵²And they worshiped Him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, ⁵³and were continually in the temple blessing God.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.



C Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

NICENE CREED

C I believe in one God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth
and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures
and ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of the Father.
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,
whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,
who spoke by the prophets.
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life **✠** of the world to come. Amen.

Sit

HYMN OF THE DAY: See, the Lord Ascends in Triumph

LSB 494



1 See, the Lord as - cends in tri - umph; Con - qu'ring King in
2 Who is this that comes in glo - ry With the trump of
3 While He lifts His hands in bless - ing, He is part - ed
4 Now our heav'n - ly Aar - on en - ters With His blood with -
5 He has raised our hu - man na - ture On the clouds to



roy - al state, Rid - ing on the clouds, His char - iot, To His
ju - bi - lee? Lord of bat - tles, God of ar - mies, He has
from His friends; While their ea - ger eyes be - hold Him, He up -
in the veil; Josh - ua now is come to Ca - naan, And the
God's right hand; There we sit in heav'n - ly plac - es, There with



heav'n - ly pal - ace gate. Hark! The choirs of an - gel voic - es
gained the vic - to - ry. He who on the cross did suf - fer,
on the clouds as - cends. He who walked with God and pleased Him,
kings be - fore Him quail. Now He plants the tribes of Is - rael
Him in glo - ry stand. Je - sus reigns, a - dored by an - gels;

Joy - ful al - le - lu - ias sing, And the por - tals
 He who from the grave a - rose, He has van - quished
 Preach - ing truth and doom to come, He, our E - noch,
 In their prom - ised rest - ing place; Now our great E -
 Man with God is on the throne. By our might - y

high are lift - ed To re - ceive their heav'n - ly King.
 sin and Sa - tan; He by death has crushed His foes.
 is trans - lat - ed To His ev - er - last - ing home.
 li - jah of - fers Dou - ble por - tion of His grace.
 Lord's as - cen - sion We by faith be - hold our own.

Text and tune: Public Domain

SERMON

Rev. Griebenaw

After the sermon, the pastor may say:

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

Philippians 4:7

C Amen.

Stand

OFFERTORY

Psalm 51:10–12

C Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -
 new a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a -
 way from Thy pres - ence, and take not Thy Ho - ly Spir - it
 from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of Thy sal - va -
 tion, and up - hold me with Thy free spir - it. A - men.

Kneel (or remain standing)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

(1 Timothy 2:1–4)

P In peace, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P In praise of our King who has gone up with a shout and the sound of a trumpet, ascended in triumph and seated at God's right hand, that we would ever rejoice and live in the truth of His victory for us, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

P For the proclamation of the Church as she goes into all the world and to the whole creation with the Gospel, that many may believe, be baptized, and be saved, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

- P** That in the midst of our enemies, God would calm our fears and fix our eyes on Christ, seated at His right hand, until at last He makes His enemies His footstool, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** For Joseph and all our leaders, that as the Son will shatter kings when He executes judgment on the nations, He would guard them from acting in ways that will garner His wrath; and that God would give them wisdom to govern us in accord with His righteous ways, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** For all who suffer in this mortal life, that the Lord would deliver them from sickness of body and mind and every other power of the enemy, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** For all who commune, that God would keep us from hardness of heart and unbelief, helping us to believe the witness of those who saw Christ after He had risen, so we may joyfully recline at table with Him today, eating His body and drinking His blood in a worthy manner, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** Lord God, heavenly Father, we here remember the sufferings and death of Your dear Son, Jesus Christ, for our salvation. Praising His victorious resurrection from the dead, we draw strength from His ascension before You, where He ever stands for us as our own High Priest. Gather us together, we pray, from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. Graciously receive our prayers, deliver and preserve us, for to You alone we give all glory, honor and worship, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** **Amen.**

The live-stream service concludes with the following:

LORD'S PRAYER

Matthew 6:9–13

- P** Taught by our Lord and trusting His promises, we are bold to pray:
- C** **Our Father who art in heaven,**
hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven;
give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
- For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

CONCLUDING COLLECT

- P** Let us pray.
 Lord God, creator of heaven and earth, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we praise You for the abundant mercy that You this day so richly have provided us, blessing us not only with daily bread for our bodies but also with heavenly food for our souls. Grant that Your living and powerful Word may abide in our hearts, working mightily in us to Your glory and for our salvation. We commit ourselves to Your divine protection and fatherly care. Let Your holy angels be with us that the evil foe may have no power over us. Look in mercy on Your Church and deliver it from all danger and adversities. By Your Holy Spirit comfort and strengthen all who are in affliction or distress, and grant Your abiding peace to us all; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.
- C** **Amen.**

Stand

BENEDICTION

Numbers 6:24–26

- P** The Lord bless you and keep you.
 The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you.
 The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and ✠ give you peace.
- C** **Amen.**

The Divine Service continues with the Lord's Supper for those at the church. Please sing/read aloud the closing hymn and come by later for Holy Communion between 10:30am and 11:30am, parking by the concrete ramp along Holt Avenue.

CLOSING HYMN: Savior, Again to Thy Dear Name We Raise

LSB 917



1 Sav - ior, a - gain to Thy dear name we raise
2 Grant us Thy peace up - on our home - ward way;
3 Grant us Thy peace, Lord, through the com - ing night;
4 Grant us Thy peace through - out our earth - ly life,



With one ac - cord our part - ing hymn of praise;
With Thee be - gan, with Thee shall end, the day.
Turn Thou for us its dark - ness in - to light.
Our balm in sor - row and our stay in strife;



Once more we bless Thee ere our wor - ship cease,
Guard Thou the lips from sin, the hearts from shame,
From harm and dan - ger keep Thy chil - dren free;
Then, when Thy voice shall bid our con - flict cease,



Then, low - ly bend - ing, wait Thy word of peace.
That in this house have called up - on Thy name.
For dark and light are both a - like to Thee.
Call us, O Lord, to Thine e - ter - nal peace.

Text and tune: Public Domain

✠ SOLI DEO GLORIA ✠
(TO GOD ALONE BE THE GLORY)

SOME FINAL THOUGHTS FROM YOUR PASTOR

Brothers and Sisters,

Happy Ascension Day! Our Lord fills the heavens with His glory! He fills you and me! Praise be to God!

First, I want to share with you a great picture of Leo playing with the “marble run” that Grandpa and Grandma sent for his fifth birthday. I think the “crazy eyes” give a hint as to the unbridled joy he is feeling!

I write this letter as the wind rages through El Centro—quite a wind but very welcome because with it comes some cooler weather! It is doubly welcome in our home because <cue the ominous music> our air conditioning has stopped working AGAIN (see the photo of my exasperated face)!



Now, the Old Adam in me is grumbling . . . (nothing like writing a pastor’s letter with a grumpy countenance, eh?) . . . but the New Man called to mind the refrain from Psalm 42:(5, 11), “Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise Him, my salvation and my God.”



All things in life are given to us by God—lent to us, if you will, for our use, for our benefit, and for the benefit of our neighbors. The Lord has given to my family innumerable blessings, including the air conditioning, as well as the means to have this repaired. And should He see fit to withhold air conditioning for a time, well, it would be rather impetuous of me to complain, especially given that this is a luxury many others cannot afford.

Perhaps you are facing a struggle in your own life—something more challenging than air conditioning? Do the words of David from Psalm 42:(3) sound familiar to you—“My tears have been my food day and night, while they say to me all the day long, ‘Where is your God?’”

In the midst of struggles, it can be a challenge to “keep the faith.” Thankfully, God keeps the faithful; by this I mean that even if we are faithless, God is faithful (2 Tim 2:13), and He never ceases calling us, seeking us, and returning us to Himself through His Word and Sacraments, and through our brothers and sisters in the faith.

The most readily available medicine for the downcast soul is God’s Holy Word; it is also, I think, the most underused remedy. Like all strong antiseptics, the Word of God stings our wounds and is bitter on our sin-laced tongues, but after drawing out the infection, God’s Word is soothing and sweet, the holy balm for our battered souls.

Not only is God’s Word a curative but is, even more importantly, a preventative, but only as we continue with the prescription by staying in His Word: reading, hearing, studying, and digesting it daily. So I want to invite you to join me for our study of the Psalms each Tuesday at Noon on “Zoom” This week we are studying Psalm 41. Then tune-in or come by in-person on Wednesday night at 7:00pm for our short prayer service (ending between 7:30pm and 7:45pm).

- To join the study on your computer, go to <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7603525715>
- To join by phone, call either “669-900-9128” or “346-248-7799” and enter 7603525715#
- The password for computer and telephone is “12345”

Lastly, please continue to mail your tithes and offerings to the church's post office box: Evangelical-Lutheran Church, PO Box 1530, El Centro, CA 92244-1530.

Yours in Christ Jesus,
+Pastor Griebenaw