



Making Wise the Simple

**Mars United Presbyterian and St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church
Joint Youth-Led Worship Service
November 12, 2023**

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Mars, PA 16046-0411

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Rev. Brian Hauser, Preacher

Rev. Katie McNeal, Presiding Minister

Maizy Fisher, Director of Music Ministries

*We are delighted to have you worship with us this morning!
Know that you are welcome here just as you are.*

If you are looking for a church to call home, why not consider making this one your own? If this is your first time visiting us, please fill out the visitor information card stapled to your bulletin.

*Everything you need to follow worship can be found in this bulletin. As you are comfortable, please rise when there is an * and join in the congregational responses, noted in **bold**.*

All songs are marked with numbers. The red book in the pew has all the songs. Look for the large number in the upper corner of the page to find the correct song.

*During the time of **Peace**, you are invited to turn to those around you and offer a word of peace. We suggest a handshake and saying, "Peace be with you." You are also welcome to offer another gesture of peace (wave, fist-bump, smile, etc.). Hand sanitizer is available in each pew.*

*At the time of **Offering**, you are invited to share a gift. You may also offer updates to our ongoing prayer list using the yellow cards in the pews and placing them in the offering plates. Visitor information cards and member attendance cards (attached to the front of the bulletin) may also be placed in the offering plates.*

*At the time of **Holy Communion**, all are welcome to come forward via the center aisle, receive the elements, and return via the side aisles. We begin at the front of the right side, commune all on the right side, then we will invite the left side forward. When you come forward, you may receive the bread from the pastor (gluten free wafers are available), then pre-filled cups with wine or grape juice from the assisting minister. You may consume the elements after receiving them then place the empty cup in the tray held by the acolyte. Those who do not receive Holy Communion are welcome to come forward for a blessing.*

If you need a restroom, restrooms are located on the bottom floor at the far side of the building from the elevator. Restrooms may be accessed either via the stairs in the rear of the sanctuary, the stairs by the Greeting Area, or the elevator.

We are blessed to have our youth lead us in worship this morning. While children and youth always play a vital role in our weekly worship, today they get to participate in more ways than on other Sundays. The Mars Area Youth Group and Kids Club meet every other week and are joint ministries of Mars United Presbyterian Church and St. John Lutheran Church. Regular meetings include games, activities and conversations tackling faith topics in engaging and age-appropriate ways. In addition to regular meetings, participants are invited to engage in extra events and service projects. To learn more about these groups, contact Pastor Brian Hauser (Mars United Presbyterian Church) or Pastor Katie McNeal (St. John Lutheran Church).

Today we also welcome local Boy Scouts to our worship service. Before our worship service, the Boy Scouts will present the colors in recognition of Veterans Day. In our prayers, we give thanks for those who have served our country as we remember the sacrifices they made and the hardship endured by their families and friends.

In worship we come together from various places and backgrounds and traditions. We come together as a diverse body of individuals united together with people of all places and times in the communion of God the Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer. Welcome. We are glad that you are here.

As you prepare for worship, you are invited to fill out the blue prayer request forms located in each pew. The cards will be collected during our hymn of the day, and prayers will be offered during the prayers of intercession.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRESENTATION OF THE COLORS IN HONOR OF VETERANS DAY

WELCOME TO WORSHIP

PRELUDE

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

We are pulled in many directions.

Many duties and tasks seek to lay claim on our lives.

This day, in this place, let service to God be your choice.

This day, in this place, we open our hearts and spirits to God.

Blessed be the God of creation who has called us here.

Praise be to God who sustains and nurtures our lives. Amen.

***GATHERING SONG *God is Here* (ELW 526)**



1 God is here! As we your peo - ple meet to of - fer
 2 Here are sym - bols to re - mind us of our life - long
 3 Here our chil - dren find a wel - come in the Shep - herd's
 4 Lord of all, of church and king - dom, in an age of



praise and prayer, may we find in full - er mea - sure
 need of grace; here are ta - ble, font, and pul - pit;
 flock and fold; here as bread and wine are tak - en,
 change and doubt, keep us faith - ful to the gos - pel;



what it is in Christ we share. Here, as in the
 here the cross has cen - tral place. Here in hon - es -
 Christ sus - tains us as of old. Here the ser - vants
 help us work your pur - pose out. Here, in this day's



world a - round us, all our var - ied skills and arts
 ty of preach - ing, here in si - lence, as in speech,
 of the Ser - vant seek in wor - ship to ex - plore
 ded - i - ca - tion, all we have to give, re - ceive;



wait the com - ing of the Spir - it in - to o - pen minds and hearts.
 here, in new - ness and re - new - al, God the Spir - it comes to each.
 what it means in dai - ly liv - ing to be - lieve and to a - dore.
 we, who can - not live with - out you, we a - dore you! We be - lieve!

***CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

God, there never seems to be enough time to do all the things that are demanded of us. Schedules become crowded. We live by the clock. We get impatient with people around us. We think we are ready for all events that will come our way.

But we are rarely ready for you.

We would like you to come to us at a planned time so that we can fit you into our busy lives. We put you and living by your love at the bottom of our priority lists. Forgive us, Lord, for trying to make you a scheduled event.

You are the eternal God who has always loved us and been ready to receive us. Help us to learn that, with you as our foundation, we can handle anything that comes our way. With you as our focus, all things pale in comparison.

Let us look at the priorities in our lives and see where we have placed service to you.

God never loses hope for us. God's word tells us of the joy God takes in offering forgiveness. In God's abundant mercy and love, We are promised forgiveness. Know that your sins have been forgiven and you have been made whole. In the name of God the Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer. **Amen.**

***THIS IS THE FEAST**


Refrain



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia,



al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 1 Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb



who was slain, whose blood set us free to be peo - ple of God.

Refrain



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia,

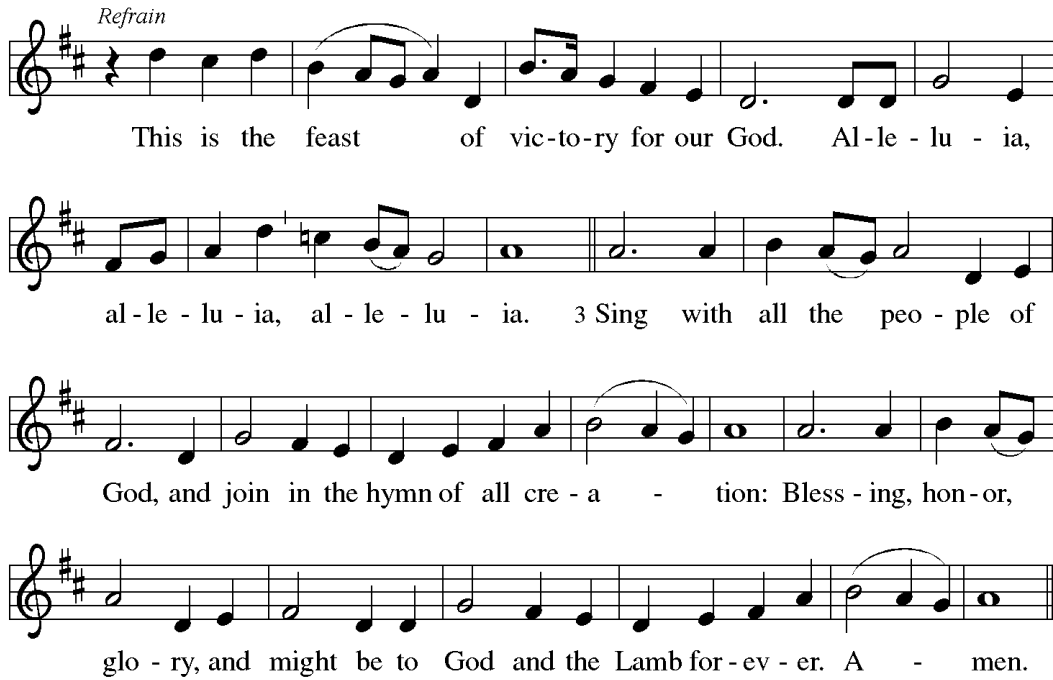


al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 2 Pow - er, rich-es, wis - dom, and



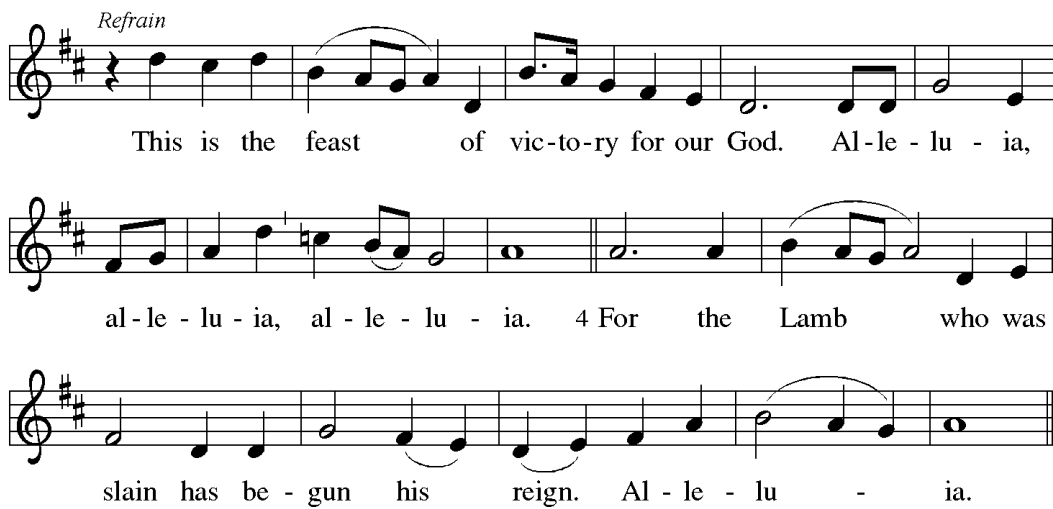
strength, and hon - or, bless - ing, and glo - ry are his.

Refrain



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia,
 al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 3 Sing with all the peo - ple of
 God, and join in the hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless - ing, hon - or,
 glo - ry, and might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.

Refrain



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia,
 al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. 4 For the Lamb who was
 slain has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia.

Final refrain



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God.
 Al-le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray: Gracious God,
**Your love has brought us together,
and it is your love that sustains us through each day.
We pray that you would keep us faithful.
Even as we watch for signs of your kingdom,
strengthen us to work with you
to bring about, here and now,
your reign on earth.
Give us the courage
to witness to your presence in the world,
today, tomorrow, and into the future.
We pray in the name of the One who comes,
Christ our Savior. Amen.**

SCRIPTURE READING: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

A reading from Thessalonians:

¹³We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. ¹⁴For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. ¹⁵For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. ¹⁶For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever. ¹⁸Therefore encourage one another with these words.

The word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the



words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

***GOSPEL READING: Matthew 25:1-13**

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

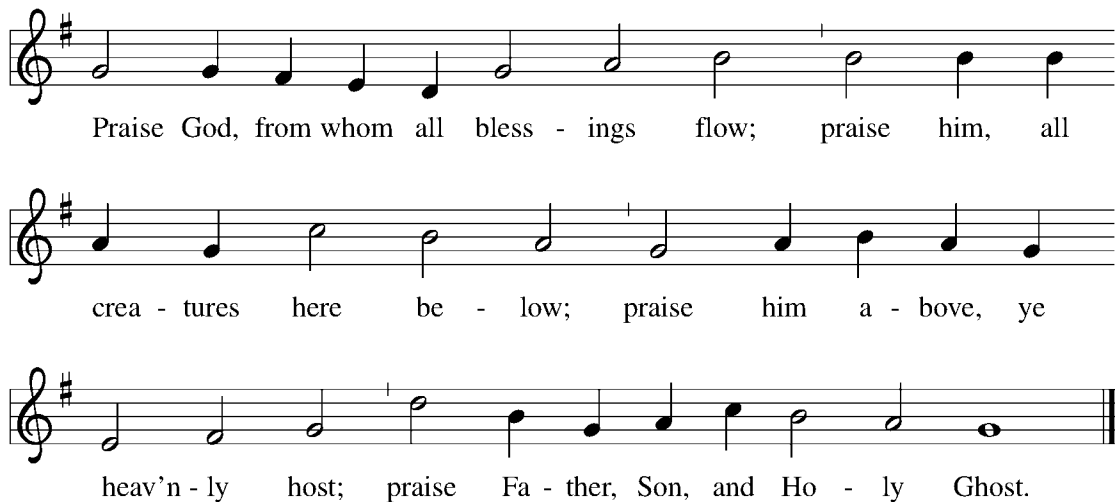
Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹“Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. ²Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. ³When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; ⁴but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. ⁵As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. ⁶But at midnight there was a shout, ‘Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.’ ⁷Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. ⁸The foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ ⁹But the wise replied, ‘No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.’ ¹⁰And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. ¹¹Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open to us.’ ¹²But he replied, ‘Truly I tell you, I do not know you.’ ¹³Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

***DOXOLOGY**



Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise him, all
crea - tures here be - low; praise him a - bove, ye
heav'n - ly host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

Children's Story

Scaredy Squirrel has a birthday party by Melanie Watt

SERMON

(by Pastor Brian Hauser)

***HYMN OF THE DAY *Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing* (ELW 807)**

(Blue prayer cards are collected during the song.)



1 Come, thou Fount of ev - 'ry bless-ing, tune my heart to sing thy grace;
2 Here I raise my Eb - en - e - zer: "Hith-er by thy help I've come";
3 Oh, to grace how great a debt - or dai - ly I'm con-strained to be;



streams of mer - cy, nev - er ceas - ing, call for songs of loud - est praise.
and I hope, by thy good plea - sure, safe - ly to ar - rive at home.
let that grace now like a fet - ter bind my wan-d'ring heart to thee.



While the hope of end - less glo - ry fills my heart with joy and love,
Je - sus sought me when a strang - er, wan - d'ring from the fold of God;
Prone to wan - der, Lord, I feel it; prone to leave the God I love.



teach me ev - er to a - dore thee; may I still thy good - ness prove.
he, to res - cue me from dan - ger, in - ter - posed his pre - cious blood.
Here's my heart, oh, take and seal it; seal it for thy courts a - bove.

***APOSTLES' CREED**

Let us come together with the whole church to confess our faith with the Apostles' Creed, using the language most comfortable to you:

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.**

On the third day he rose again;

**he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

I believe in the Holy Spirit,

the holy catholic church,

the communion of saints,

the forgiveness of sins,

the resurrection of the body,

and the life everlasting. Amen.

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Let us turn our hearts to God, as we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

O God, we wait for you to come again into our midst. Sometimes we wait patiently, sometimes not. Always we are aware of how much the world needs you, come quickly to your people, bring your salvation, and center us in hope found only in you. Deepen our faith through meaningful worship and send us out with your justice and truth. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

O God for whom we watch, we glimpse your power in rushing water and your beauty in the darkening night. Restore this creation, and save us from foolish, wasteful living. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

O God for whom we long, let justice roll down like waters on all nations. Bless citizens with wise leaders; save your children from war. We pray for the veterans of this community. We give you thanks for those who have served and defended our country and the values of freedom and justice we hold so dear. Help us be mindful of the sacrifices they made and the hardship endured by their families and friends, so that we never take for granted the privileges they have secured for us. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

O God, in whom we hope, we pray for all who are in need. Provide for those who experience homelessness or hunger, especially those we will serve today, support the under- or unemployed, and comfort any who are suffering on this day. We pray for those who suffer the effects of war through mental, spiritual, or physical illness, through homelessness and hunger, through loneliness and alienation. Grant them safety and community. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

O God, in whom we remain, we remember our loved ones who have died and now live in you. Bring comfort and the assurance of new life to all who grieve. Be near to all who need you especially Bob, Geneva, Cherry, Winnie, Henry, Harry, Roy, Ellen, Ruth, Sally, Katie, Debi, those on our prayer list, and all whom we lift up before you now (*received prayer cards are read*). Accept these prayers, gracious God, and those known only to you; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

***SHARING THE PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Let us share God's peace with one another.

OFFERING

Gifts may be designated to either St. John Lutheran Church or Mars United Presbyterian by writing on the envelope (extra envelopes are available in the pews). Offerings that are not designated will be split evenly between the churches to help further the mission and ministry of each congregation.

OFFERTORY HYMN *Softly and Tenderly Jesus is Calling* (ELW 608)



1 Soft - ly and ten - der - ly Je - sus is call - ing, call - ing for
2 Why should we tar - ry when Je - sus is plead - ing, plead - ing for
3 Oh, for the won - der - ful love he has prom - ised, prom - ised for



you and for me. See, on the por - tals he's wait - ing and watch - ing,
you and for me? Why should we lin - ger and heed not his mer - cies,
you and for me! Though we have sinned, he has mer - cy and par - don,

Refrain



watch - ing for you and for me.
mer - cies for you and for me? "Come home, come home!
par - don for you and for me.



You who are wea - ry, come home." Ear - nest - ly, ten - der - ly,



Je - sus is call - ing, call - ing, "O sin - ner, come home!"

*OFFERING PRAYER

God of all goodness, generations have turned to you, gathered around your table, and shared your abundant blessings. Number us among them that, as we gather these gifts from your abundance, and give thanks for your rich blessings, we may feast upon your very self and care for all that you have made, through Jesus Christ, our Sovereign and Servant.

Amen.

***GREAT THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Holy God, you alone are holy, you alone are God.

The universe declares your praise: beyond the stars;
beneath the sea; within each cell; with every breath.

We praise you, O God.

Generations bless your faithfulness: through the water; by night and day;
across the wilderness; out of exile; into the future.

We bless you, O God.

We give you thanks for your dear Son:
at the heart of human life; near to those who suffer;
beside the sinner; among the poor; with us now.

We thank you, O God.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it,
and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat;
this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper,
he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink,
saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

We pray for the gift of your Spirit: in our gathering;
within this meal; among your people; throughout the world.

Blessing, praise, and thanks to you, holy God,
through Christ Jesus, by your Spirit, in your church, without end.

Amen.

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us join our varied voices and languages and pray as we have been taught:

**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**

***INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

There is a place for you at the banquet. Come and feast at Jesus' table.

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

Through this meal, we know forgiveness, life, and salvation as the blessings of God's sacramental grace. In response to Jesus' invitation, all are welcome to come forward and experience the real presence of Christ in the bread and wine of communion. Those who do not receive the elements of bread and wine are invited to come forward for a blessing. Grape juice and gluten free wafers are available.

COMMUNION SONG *Lamb of God*

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace.

COMMUNION HYMN *Blessed Assurance* (ELW 638)



- 1 Bless-ed as-sur-ance, Je-sus is mine! Oh, what a fore-taste of glo-ry di-vine!
- 2 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, per-fect de-light, vi-sions of rap-ture now burst on my sight;
- 3 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, all is at rest; I in my Sav-ior am hap-py and blest,



Heir of sal-va-tion, pur-chase of God, born of his Spir-it, washed in his blood.
an-gels de-scend-ing bring from a-bove ech-oes of mer-cy, whis-pers of love.
watch-ing and wait-ing, look-ing a-bove, filled with his good-ness, lost in his love.

Refrain



This is my sto-ry, this is my song, prais-ing my Sav-ior all the day long:



this is my sto-ry, this is my song, prais-ing my Sav-ior all the day long.

***POST-COMMUNION PRAYER**

Lord Jesus Christ, as we have proclaimed your death by eating this bread and drinking this cup, help us to wait for you, to wish for you, and to watch for you, so that when you come again you will find us ready. For you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

***BLESSING**

May the God of all creation, in whose image we are made,
who claims us and calls us beloved,
who strengthens us for service,
give you reason to rejoice and be glad!
The blessing of God,
Sovereign, † Savior, and Spirit, be with you today and always.

Amen.

***SENDING SONG *Lead Me, Guide Me* (ELW 768)**

Refrain

Lead me, guide me, along the way;
For if you lead me, I cannot stray.
Lord, let me walk each day with thee.
Lead me, O Lord, lead me.

1. I am weak and I need thy strength and pow'r
To help me over my weakest hour.
Help me through the darkness thy face to see.
Lead me, O Lord, lead me. *Refrain*
2. Help me tread in the paths of righteousness
Be my aid when Satan and sin oppress
I am putting all my trust in thee.
Lead me, O Lord, lead me. *Refrain*
3. I am lost if you take your hand from me,
I am blind without thy light to see.
Lord, just always let me thy servant be.
Lead me, O Lord, lead me. *Refrain*

***DISMISSAL**

“Jesus said,

‘If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples and you will know the truth.’”

John 8:31b-32a

Beloved of God, go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Today's Music

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Doxology (Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow). Text: Thomas Ken, 1637-1711. Public Domain.

Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing. Text: Robert Robinson, Music: J. Wyeth, *Repository of Sacred Music*, Part II, 1813. Public Domain.

Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling. Text and Music: Will L Thompson (1847-1909). Public Domain.

Blessed Assurance. Text: Fanny J. Crosby (1820-1915); Music: Phoebe P. Knapp (1830-1908). Public Domain.

Lead Me, Guide Me. Text: Doris Akers, 1922-1995, Music: Doris Akers. Unichappell Music Inc..

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