



Gathering

Welcome

Prelude

Call to Worship (Psalm 70:1, 4-5)

A: Be pleased, O God, to deliver me;

C: **O LORD, make haste to help me.**

Let all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you;

**Let those who love your salvation say forever,
"Great is the Lord."**

But as for me, I am poor and needy;
come to me quickly, O God.

**You are my helper and my deliverer;
O LORD, do not tarry.**

Gathering Song

“Rejoice, Rejoice Believers!”

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1. Rejoice, rejoice, believers, and let your lights appear;
the evening is advancing, and darker night is near.
The bridegroom is arising and soon is drawing nigh.
Up, pray and watch and wrestle; at midnight comes the cry.
2. The watchers on the mountain proclaim the bridegroom near;
go forth as he approaches with alleluias clear.
the marriage feast is waiting; the gates wide open stand.
Arise, O heirs of glory; the bridegroom is at hand.
3. Our hope and expectation, O Jesus, now appear;
arise, O Sun so longed for, o'er this benighted sphere.
With hearts and hands uplifted, we plead, O Lord, to see
the day of earth's redemption that sets your people free!

Greeting

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

P: Let us pray,

O God of justice and love,

you illumine our way through life with the words of Jesus. Give us the light we need, and awaken us to the needs of others, for we pray in Jesus' name. Amen

After Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension, the earliest Christians expected Jesus to return signalling the fulfillment of the reign of God. But as the years passed and Jesus did not return as expected – and as followers of Jesus aged and died – there was a concern that those who died would be excluded from the resurrection to eternal life. Paul addresses this concern with a message of hope for the church.

A reading from Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians, the 4th chapter.

¹³ But we 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.

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God!

Gospel Acclamation *(sung together)*

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Alleluia, Lord to whom shall we go?

You have the words of eternal life.

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Gospel

P: The holy gospel according to Matthew, the 25th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus said, '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.

Sermon

Hymn of the Day

“Lord, Take My Hand”

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1. Lord, take my hand and lead me upon life's way;
direct, protect, and feed me from day to day.
Without your grace and favour I go astray;
so take my hand, O Saviour, and lead the way.

2. Lord, when the tempest rages, I need not fear;
for you, the Rock of Ages, are always near.
Close by your side abiding, I fear no foe,
for when your hand is guiding, in peace I go.

3. Lord, when the shadows lengthen and night has come,
I know that you will strengthen my steps toward home,
then nothing can impede me, O blessed Friend!
So, take my hand and lead me unto the end.

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Creed

P: We are made God's people through our baptism into Christ. Living together in trust and hope, let us confess our faith:

**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,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father;
he will come again 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

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

P: Into your hands, O God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord who teaches us to pray:

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

Sending

Announcements may be made.

Benediction

Sending Hymn “Blessed Assurance” # 638

1 Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
born of his Spirit, washed in his blood.

Refrain:

This is my story, this is my song,
praising my Savior all the day long:

this is my story, this is my song,
praising my Savior all the day long.

2 Perfect submission, perfect delight,
visions of rapture now burst on my sight;
angels descending bring from above
echoes of mercy, whispers of love. [Refrain]

3 Perfect submission, all is at rest;
I in my Savior am happy and blest,
watching and waiting, looking above,
filled with his goodness, lost in his love. [Refrain]

Dismissal

A: Beloved of God,
go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God!