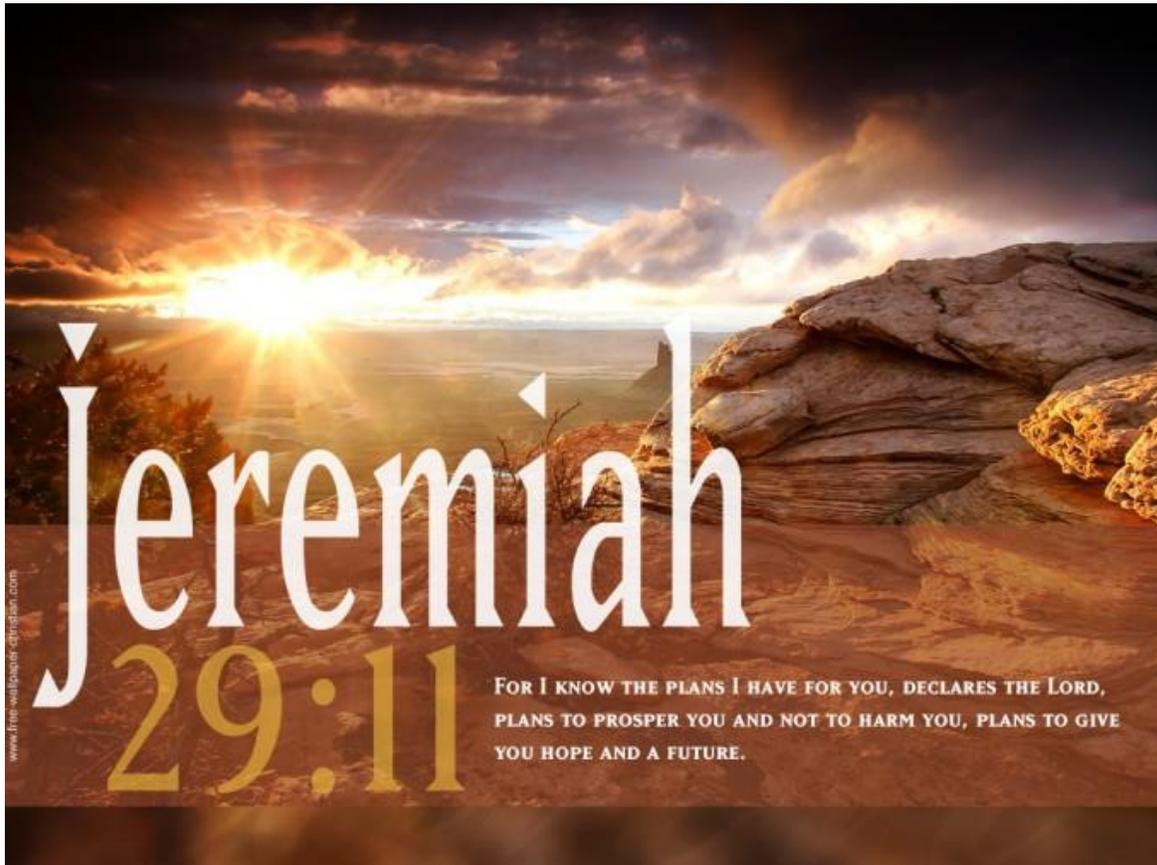


St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church
A Family Connecting in Christ



Pastor Kevin Raddatz
Principal Jon Woldt
501 West Park Avenue
Libertyville, IL 60048
847-362-4424
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WELCOME TO ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

At this time our services are for people wearing masks and social distancing!

Please know that even as we experience this awkwardness, your Good Shepherd holds you close to his heart and goes with you to share his love!

To Our Guests

- We pray that you receive a warm welcome and are blessed by the message of God's Word in our lessons and hymns. If you have questions, please ask!
- Our service is designed to focus us on Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. The Holy Spirit does that by exposing our need for Christ and by showing us the wonders of God's grace in Christ – forgiveness and peace, help and hope for life in this world, and life forever with God in heaven.

Our Communion Practice

We practice close communion, the Biblical and ancient practice of the church.

We invite our congregation members and visitors from sister WELS or ELS congregations to join us, but ask Christians from other denominations to kindly respect our practice. Further explanation is in the pew racks or from our pastor.

We Care about Your Children

We love to have children with us in worship.

- If your children are crying loudly, our nursery, Gathering Area (back of church), and downstairs Fellowship Hall are audio-equipped for you and your young children. When your children are ready, come back so we can worship together.

We Care about Your Special Needs

- **Large Print** Service Folders are available from an usher.
- **Hearing Assistance** for those with hearing aids is provided through our Hearing Loop or personal hearing devices available at the "sound table."
- A **wheelchair lift** is available for your assistance; please ask an usher.



Our Facilities

Restrooms are in our Fellowship Hall, downstairs and to the right of the kitchen.

Our Ministry

St. John offers an excellent preschool-8th grade school program. We are members of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) - www.wels.net.

DIVINE SERVICE II

IN OUR WORSHIP THIS MONTH ... we are in the season of End Times. In our world, both in the news and in nature, we are reminded that we are in the end times of this world and the end times of our own lives. This year - pulled by our school theme verse, Jeremiah 29:11 - we go to the prophet Jeremiah for God's promise and his wisdom in facing these end times.

IN OUR WORSHIP TODAY ... we celebrate God's gifts to us in the Lutheran Reformation. On October 31, 1517, an Augustinian monk named Martin Luther nailed 95 Theses to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg. In these statements Luther contested the church teaching of the day that people are saved and made right with God by what they do to pay for their sin and earn God's favor. When the church of the day refused reformation, Luther dug deeper and deeper into Scriptures and - by God's grace - found the eternal Truths we treasure today -

Sola Gratia, Sola Fide, Sola Scriptura
Grace Alone, Faith Alone, Scripture Alone.

OPENING HYMN

"A Mighty Fortress Is Our God"
Hymn 201

A mighty fortress is our God,
A trusty shield and weapon;
He helps us free from ev'ry need
That has us now o'ertaken.
The old evil foe
Now means deadly woe;
Deep guile and great might
Are his dread arms in fight;
On earth is not his equal.

With might of ours could naught be done;
Soon were our loss effected.
But for us fights the valiant one
Whom God himself elected.
You ask, "Who is this?"
Jesus Christ it is,
The almighty Lord.
And there's no other God;
He holds the field forever.

Though devils all the world should fill,
All eager to devour us,
We tremble not, we fear no ill;
They shall not overpow'r us.
This world's prince may still
Scowl fierce as he will,
He can harm us none.
He's judged; the deed is done!
One little word can fell him.

The word they still shall let remain,
Nor any thanks have for it;
He's by our side upon the plain
With his good gifts and Spirit.
And do what they will -
Hate, steal, hurt, or kill -
Though all may be gone,
Our victory is won;
The kingdom's ours forever.

INVOCATION

M: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY (*Luther's Morning Prayer*)

I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, your dear Son, that you have kept me this night from all harm and danger. Keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings in life may please you. Into your hands I commend my body and soul and all things. Let your holy angel be with me that the wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen.

M: I hold in my hand one of the treasures of the Lutheran Reformation, a Bible, God's Word to the world, God's Word for his people. We get to have and read God's Word, in our own language, unfiltered by church or state, so that we can discover for ourselves the Truths of God. In here God reveals the secrets of his heart, especially in this - how we can stand right before him. In here we learn, we don't, we can't stand right before God based on our righteousness or performance. But God, in his grace, has redeemed us in the blood of his Son Jesus, and he now gives us his righteousness (worked by Jesus Christ) through faith in his promises. That is why we can stand right with God. The Apostle Paul put in this way:

Romans 3:20-25

Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin. But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, from all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

As Lutherans, we put it this way:

Regarding the righteousness of faith before God, we unanimously believe, teach, and confess... that poor sinful people are justified before God, that is, absolved - pronounced free of all sins and of the judgement of the damnation that they deserved and accepted as children and heirs of eternal life - without the least bit of our own "merit of worthiness," apart from all preceding, present, or subsequent works. We are justified on the basis of sheer grace, because of the sole merit, the entire obedience, and the bitter

suffering, death, and the resurrection of our Lord Christ alone, whose obedience is reckoned to us as righteousness.

The Holy Spirit conveys these benefits to us in the promise of the holy gospel. Faith is the only means through which we lay hold of them, accept them, apply them to ourselves, and appropriate them. Faith itself is a gift of God, through which we acknowledge Christ our redeemer in the Word of the gospel and trust in him. Only because of his obedience does God the Father forgive our sins by grace, regard us as upright and righteous, and give us eternal salvation.

(Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration, Article III:9-11)

Now as the forgiven children of God, and heirs of this God's grace, we pray:

M: May this be a time, O Lord, for confession and repentance. Forgive us for the apathy that harms our faith and hinders our works. Forgive us for boasting of our past achievements and for blaming others for our present problems. Rid us of indifference to public worship and Bible study. Destroy the distrust that plagues us, and shatter every thought and word that harms the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace.

C: Create in us pure hearts, O God, and renew steadfast spirits within us.

M: Let this be a time, O Lord, when you renew us again by Word and sacrament, when you reform our hearts and minds, and when you restore to us the joy of fellowship and service. Grant to us in this age and in this place the courage of the apostles, the steadfastness of the reformers, and the dedication of those who have gone before us.

C: May the Lord our God be with us as he was with our fathers; may he never forsake us.

M: Let this be a time, O Lord, when we recommit and reconsecrate ourselves to the ministry of the gospel. Let us find joy in our unity, zeal for our work, and success in our labor.

C: May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine on us, that his ways may be known on earth, his salvation among all nations. Amen.

FIRST LESSON

Jeremiah 7:1-11

This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD: "Stand at the gate of the LORD's house and there proclaim this message:

"Hear the word of the LORD, all you people of Judah who come through these gates to worship the LORD. This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: Reform your ways and your actions, and I will let you live in this place. Do not trust in deceptive words and say, "This is the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD!" If you really change your ways and your actions and deal with each other justly, if you do not oppress the alien, the fatherless or the widow and do not shed innocent blood in this place, and if you do not follow other gods to your own harm, then I will let you live in this place, in the land I gave your forefathers for ever and ever. But look, you are trusting in deceptive words that are worthless.

"Will you steal and murder, commit adultery and perjury, burn incense to Baal and follow other gods you have not known, and then come and stand before me in this house, which bears my Name, and say, "We are safe" - safe to do all these detestable things? Has this house, which bears my Name, become a den of robbers to you? But I have been watching! declares the LORD.

GOSPEL LESSON

John 8:31-36

To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

They answered him, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?"

Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."

SERMON

Jeremiah 7:1-11

November 1, 2020 - Reformation Sunday Jeremiah 7:1-11

“Do you recant? Do you renounce and reject your Lutheran teaching?” It wasn’t just a question; it was a demand from The Holy Roman Emperor. And Martin Luther answered. In a room lined with the armed soldiers, the armed guards of the Emperor, Luther answered: “I cannot and will not recant God help me. Amen.” That was the Diet of Worms, 1521. Nine years later, at the Diet of Augsburg, 1530, it was wasn’t Luther standing before the Holy Roman Emperor, it was the Lutheran princes, nobles, rulers of Germany. Again the Emperor demanded: “Lutheran preaching must stop; Lutheran preaching must be silenced.” This time it was the German prince, Margrave George, who stepped forward: “Before I let anyone take me from the Word of God and ask me to deny my God, I will kneel and let him strike off my head.”

For Luther and Margrave George, being a Lutheran, better, being a Christian, wasn’t something to take lightly. For Luther and for Margrave George, God’s promise of forgiveness and grace wasn’t a ticket to comfort and convenience; God’s promise of forgiveness and grace wasn’t permission to fit in with the world and go with the flow. No, for Luther and for Margrave George, being Lutheran, being a Christian, knowing the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that was reason to step in and step up with Jesus, no matter the cost to comfort and convenience, no matter the cost to life in this world.

Not everyone thinks that way.

We leave Germany and go to Jerusalem, some 600-plus years before Jesus was born. Jerusalem and most all of Judah were living the life of the world - paying little, precious little attention to God - they were too busy fitting in with the world. Until God raised up King Josiah. Under godly King Josiah, God’s people had something of a reformation. Josiah ordered idol shrines torn down; he ordered God’s Temple in Jerusalem to be repaired after years of neglect and abuse. And God blessed Josiah’s efforts. In repairing the Temple, they found a copy of the Book of the Law of the LORD. For who knows how many years, God’s people had been living without a Bible; for years, most of God’s people were living like they didn’t have God. But now God’s Word was rediscovered and King Josiah doubled-down in leading his people in Reformation.

For some people - I think of Daniel, and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and God knows how many more - for some people, Josiah’s Reformation meant new life with God, new life in heart and soul. For others, perhaps for most, Josiah’s Reformation was little more than a speed-bump on their road to hell. For the people in our lesson, Josiah’s Reformation was turning out to be little more than make-up, a fresh coat of paint, on a rotten heart.

The people in our lesson were living the life of the world - the rich stepping on the poor, the strong stepping on the weak, the insiders pushing around the outsiders - each looking out for themselves. Not that different from today. They were living the life of the world - taking what they wanted, hooking up with whomever they wanted, lying, and leaving God behind to fit in and follow the ways of the world. Again, not that different from today. We hear some of what they were doing - stealing, murdering, committing adultery, worshiping idols - and we might think: "That's not me." But what did Jesus say? "Anybody who hates is a murderer." "Anybody who looks lustfully has already committed adultery in his heart." And for idolatry, how many of us aren't living lifestyles that are more generous with ourselves than generous with God?

There was something else that stoked God's anger. The people thought they were safe to keep on in their sin. The people thought they were safe to keep on blowing God off. Why? They were God's people; they had the temple of the Lord; they were members of God's church, and - some more, some less - they came to church and did the church thing. That just had to mean they were in good with God, safe to keep on sinning.

Sound familiar? Today it might sound a bit different. Instead of "This is the temple of the LORD" what might those voices sound like today? "I'm a Lutheran, I've been confirmed, I've got a church, I'm a member Even if I don't obey, I still pray, I still pay" And the voices go on: "It doesn't matter. It doesn't matter what we do, or don't do. We'll all be alright. God loves us; he just has to love us." Sound familiar? Oh, that, my friends, can sound all too familiar, not because of how many times it comes into our ears, but because of how many times it comes out of our hearts.

Back to Germany, Wittenberg, 1517. Luther was hearing those same voices from church and from people. The church of the day was saying: "Do the God-thing we tell you to do; pay the God-price we charge you; and you'll be safe and in good with God." That gave the people another excuse, another reason to think: "It doesn't matter what I do. I've done my God-thing; I've paid my God-price. I'm in good with God and fine the way I am." In Jerusalem, Jeremiah went to the Temple gate; he spoke up and spoke out: "Reform, repent, or Jerusalem and the Temple will be destroyed." In Wittenberg, October 31, 1517, Luther went to the Castle Church; he spoke up and spoke out with 95 Theses nailed to the church door.

The first of those 95 Theses reads: "*When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said, 'Repent' (Mt 4:17), he willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance.*" Twenty years later, Luther was still saying much the same thing, but with this difference. Instead of speaking out against the church in Rome, he was speaking out against his own church in front of him. Why? Because when we hear the good news of free forgiveness it is so easy to think that we have a license to keep on sinning. When we hear of free grace, it is so easy to think that we have a free pass to slouch and to slough. That's why I

need, we need to take Jeremiah's warning to heart, to apply Luther's words to ourselves: *"When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said, 'Repent' (Mt 4:17), he willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance."* Free forgiveness is not a license to keep on in sin. Free grace is not a pass to slouch and slough. Instead, free forgiveness is the treasure and power that makes us alive to live for God, no matter the cost to our comfort or convenience.

Why? Think of what the grace of God means for you. Imagine heaven - the perfect paradise of God and his angels - no COVID, no riots, no reason for COVID or riots, a home of perfect peace and love. Now imagine God in heaven - all-holy and all-powerful, all-glorious beyond anything you can imagine. That God loves you and he wants you to share his glory and live with him in his paradise home. That's right - as messed up as this world is (you and me included), as much as this world (you and me included) has spit on God, as much as God can't-stand-hates the way we sin against him and the way we hurt each other, that God - the only God who can give the peace of heaven - he loves you and wants to share heaven with you, with us!

Hearing that, I'm not sure whether to think: "Wow!" or "How? Why?" Here's the "how?" and the "why?" Not because you or I have done some good thing to work our way into his graces. No, God loves you because he is love and he wants you to be able to live in his love. Even after we've ...? Yes, even after. So, in love, he found a way to free us from the guilt that would damn us; he found a way to make us right for the holiness of heaven. Instead of making us pay, Jesus took our place and, on the cross, he paid for us. Instead of making us work and obey our way into his good graces, Jesus took our place and obeyed for us. Now, with Jesus, God sees you sins forgiven full and free; with Jesus, God sees you right for life with him in heaven.

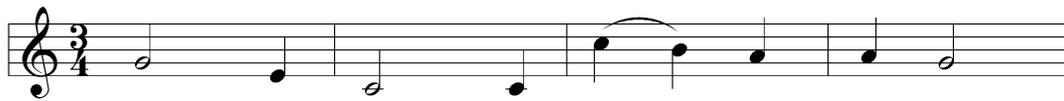
With God's grace in Jesus, we don't have to wonder where we stand with God; we don't have to fear where we stand with God. Now instead of going through life trying to ignore God, trying to make life good for ourselves, we get to go through life in partnership with God, blessed by God to share the love of God. Instead of facing life and all its troubles - "What's next? Now what?" - we get to face life and all its troubles knowing this - "If God is for us, who can be against us?" "He will make all things work together for our good." That means that even in the face of death, we can be at peace - at peace with God, with paradise ahead of us.

By God's grace, with the help of God, Luther didn't back down, and he didn't use grace as an excuse to slouch and to slough. He didn't use grace as an excuse to settle in sin, to fit in with the world and go with the flow. Neither did George. And by God's grace, neither will we. God help us. Amen.

HYMN

"Church of God, Elect and Glorious"

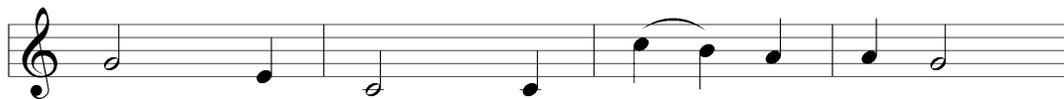
Hymn 774



1 Church of God, e - lect and glo - rious,
 2 God has called you out of dark - ness
 3 Once you were an al - ien peo - ple,
 4 Church of God, e - lect and ho - ly,



Ho - ly na - tion, cho - sen race;
 In - to his most mar - v'lous light,
 Stran - gers to God's heart of love;
 Be the peo - ple he in - tends;



Called as God's own spe - cial peo - ple,
 Brought his truth to life with - in you,
 But he brought you home in mer - cy,
 Strong in faith and swift to an - swer



Roy - al priests and heirs of grace:
 Turned your blind - ness in - to sight.
 Cit - i - zens of heav'n a - bove.
 Each com - mand your mas - ter sends:



Know the pur - pose of your call - ing.
 Let your light so shine a - round you
 Let his love flow out to oth - ers;
 Roy - al priests, ful - fill your call - ing



Show to all his might - y deeds;
 That God's name is glo - ri - fied
 Let them feel a Fa - ther's care;
 Through your sac - ri - fice and prayer;

Tell of love that knows no lim - its,
 And all find fresh hope and pur - pose
 That they too may know his wel - come
 Give your lives in joy - ful ser - vice—

Grace that meets all hu - man needs.
 In Christ Je - sus cru - ci - fied.
 And his count - less bless - ings share.
 Sing his praise, his love de - clare.

This hymn emphasizes how Christians naturally fulfill what God has created and called them to be in Christ Jesus.

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Tune: ABBOTT'S LEIGH (87 87 D) Cyril V. Taylor, 1907–1992 © 1942, Ren. 1970 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

LORD'S PRAYER (AS EXPLAINED BY MARTIN LUTHER)

M: I invite you to lift up your hearts to God and pray with me the Lord's Prayer as Christ our Lord taught us.

We pray that God, our Father in heaven, would look with mercy on us, his needy children on earth. We pray that God would grant us grace so that his holy name be hallowed by us and all the world through the pure and true teaching of his Word and the fervent love of our lives, and that he would graciously turn us from all false doctrine and evil living by which his precious name is being blasphemed and profaned.

C: **Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.**

M: We pray that his kingdom may come to us and expand, that all transgressors and all who are blinded and bound by the devil's kingdom may be brought to know Jesus Christ his Son by faith, and that the number of Christians may be increased.

C: **Your kingdom come.**

M: We pray that we may be strengthened by his Spirit to do and to accept his will, both in life and in death, in good and in evil things, and always break, slay, and sacrifice our own wills.

C: **Your will be done on earth as in heaven.**

M: We pray that our Father would also give us our daily bread, preserve us from selfish cares, and help to trust that he will provide for all our needs.

C: **Give us today our daily bread.**

M: We ask that God would forgive our sins as we forgive those who sin against us so that our hearts may rest and rejoice in a good conscience before him, and that no sin may ever frighten or alarm us.

C: **Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.**

M: We pray that God would not lead us into temptation but help us by his Spirit to subdue the flesh, to despise the [sinful] world and its ways, and to overcome the devil with all his wiles.

C: **Lead us not into temptation.**

M: And finally we pray that God would deliver us from all evil, both of body and soul, now and forever.

C: **But deliver us from evil.**

M: All those who sincerely desire these things will say from their very hearts: "Amen," trusting without doubt that their prayers are answered in heaven as Christ has promised:

"Whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you will receive it, and you will."

C: **For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.**

THE SACRAMENT

(Guests, please see our communion practice on p.2)

M: The Lord be with you.

C: **(Spoken) And also with you.**

M: Lift up your hearts.

C: **We lift them up unto the Lord.**

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

C: **It is good and right so to do.**

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

M: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my † body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my † blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

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

C: **Amen.**

DISTRIBUTION

M: We give you thanks, O Lord, for the foretaste of the heavenly banquet that you have given us to eat and to drink in this sacrament. Through this gift you have fed our faith, nourished our hope, and strengthened our love. By your Spirit help us to live as your holy people until that day when you will receive us as your guests at the wedding supper of the Lamb, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

BLESSING*

M: 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. Amen.

ELECTION PRAYER

Dear heavenly Father, in this election year our minds are once again directed to the political affairs of our nation. Who will be our next elected leaders? Who will have the daunting task of upholding the constitution and its principles? Will these people also uphold the divine principles of Holy Scripture? Our human nature would love to take control of the election. We want to control every aspect of our lives. When we attempt to do so, however, we always end up with failure and disappointment. Remind us daily that you are our sovereign, all-powerful God. In your grace, you direct the affairs of this nation. Lead us, therefore, to put our absolute trust in you to oversee this election. And whatever the outcome, keep us focused on our mission: to proclaim the gospel of Jesus. Amen. (From *God Bless Our Native Land: Prayers for an election year*)

CLOSING HYMN

"God Bless Our Native Land"

God bless our native land!
Firm may she ever stand
Through storm and night!
When the wild tempests rave,
Ruler of wind and wave,
Do thou our country save
By thy great might.

For her our prayers shall rise
To God above the skies;
On him we wait.
Thou who art ever nigh,
Guarding with watchful eye,
To thee aloud we cry,
God save the state!

We thank Justin Wintrone for sharing his musical talents today [Sunday].

OFFERING (Please fill out friendship pads on pews)

If you prefer online giving, you may scan this code with your mobile device.



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