

## Sermon followed by Service - February 8, 26 - A Time to Pause – 3<sup>rd</sup> Commandment

Do we have any nappers here? A quick snooze and you're up and ready for more. You know it's true. Or how about vacations? Do we have anyone here who likes to get away, go on vacation, come back refreshed? You know it's true, too, don't you?

God has designed us to need rest

- rest for our bodies and minds, rest for our souls.

God has designed us to be blessed by rest

- rest for our bodies and minds, rest for our souls.

So what did God do? He calendared rest; he modeled rest - whether needed or not. God himself took a day off. After six days of creating the universe, when God was done, he took a day to rest; he set and blessed the seventh day as a holy day, a special day - to marvel at what he had done.

At Mt. Sinai, God calendared rest in a different way; he commanded rest - whether needed or not. With the Third Commandment, God said: "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy." Between Adam and Eve and Moses, did Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob have a Sabbath Day? We aren't told. But we are told, at Mt. Sinai, God set the seventh day apart from the rest of the week to be a Sabbath Day, a rest day.

A day with no work. Sounds good, doesn't it? It gets better. The Sabbath Day wasn't just a day with no work, it was a day for the LORD, "**a day of sacred assembly.**" God's Old Testament Sabbath Day wasn't a chore day to get caught up on chores at home; it wasn't a play day, a day for self - sleep in and then laze around; the Sabbath Day was a special day for God's people to get together as the people of God - a day for worship and Bible study. After a hard week of work, after a week of frustration and falling short, after a week of hurting and then hurting the people you love - God's people could get together and rest together. Together they could lift each other's burdens - "Lord, have mercy! Christ, have mercy! Lord, have mercy!" Together they could hear and share God's promise - "Peace!" After a week of being ground down, together they could look up - "God, help us!" After a week of being discouraged, together they could encourage each other - "Look what God has done for us! Look what God is doing for us today! Look what God has in store for us!" God gave his people so much better than a day for chores, so much better than a day for sleeping in, lazing, and games. God gave his people time to rest and be refreshed by his Holy Spirit.

So what did God's people do with this special gift, this special day with God? In Amos, you heard what some did - they chomped at the bit; they couldn't wait to get back out there, to live the life of the world and stick it to each other. In our Gospel lesson, you heard what others did with their day for time with God - they set up a system of rules, rules to make themselves look good, rules to keep themselves from actually having to do good.

This last week I saw a chart - reasons why people leave the church. Can you guess the number one reason? Hypocrisy in the church - Christians putting on a show at church on Sunday, and then the rest of the week living like the rest of the world. That's not just a them problem, is it? That's a me problem - "God have mercy on me a sinner; God forgive me; God help me show your Sunday best all week long."

What else do we hear in our lessons? In Amos, we hear God call his people out. God knows - not only the face we put on, but what we have going on inside. God knows - not only what we do here, but what we do the rest of the week. God knows - and God judges. How? We see God more and more taking his Word away - not just away from those outside the church, but away from those inside the church who think they can have God's blessing without listening to God's Word. God, have mercy!

And in our Gospel lesson, what do we see? Not only does Jesus take on the breaking of the Third Commandment, Jesus takes on the keeping of the Third Commandment. On the Sabbath Day, where was he? At church. Jesus knew the pastor was a jerk and a hypocrite; he knew so many of the people at church would have their hearts set on themselves, but Jesus wasn't looking for excuses not to go; he didn't let his hurt stop him from going. Jesus was at church - whether he needed it or not. Why? First and foremost - because that's where God wanted him to be. So there Jesus was - loving God with all his heart and all his soul and all his strength. There Jesus was, not looking to be loved, but looking to love his neighbor as himself. There Jesus was keeping the Third Commandment - not just as an example for us - be like Jesus; but there Jesus was keeping the Third Commandment, for us, in our place, as God's substitute for us.

In Jesus, God sees his Third Commandment fulfilled. Baptized into Jesus, God sees his Third Commandment fulfilled in you. What does that mean? In Jesus, God doesn't see my mind wander; he doesn't see me reading the News and Reminders during the sermon, or checking my watch or my phone; he doesn't see Lisa elbow me when I yawn, or my Mom get after me for nodding over and over. And when we sing, he doesn't hear me wondering: "Who chose this hymn?" And "why do we have to sing so slowly?" [Thank you, Beth; thank you, Tim, for keeping us moving!] I could go on and on. I don't know about you, but the devil works hard on me when it's time to worship. But, in Jesus, God sees me, and God sees you and hears you - forgiven - listening like Mary - singing like the angels - speaking with the Spirit - loving with Jesus.

And something more - God sees you free! In Jesus, God sees his Sabbath Law fulfilled. Baptized into Jesus, God sees his Sabbath Law fulfilled in you and for you. What does that mean? God doesn't see you under law - "You better go to church or else. You better sing out or else." Instead God sees you right and free. And instead of treating us like kids who need rules, God treats us like adults, adults who are wise with Jesus.

I have a problem there, don't I? I don't always think like an adult wise with Jesus. My sinful nature never thinks like an adult wise with Jesus. Instead, my sinful nature does what? My sinful nature chases distractions; things God counts as garbage to be burned up, I think of as all-important, more important than God on God's day. And then my sinful nature excuses - "but Sunday is the only time I can..." And then my sinful nature blames - "I can't help it; it's his fault; it's her fault." My sinful nature distracts and excuses and blames, but most of all, my sinful nature sets itself up as God - "if we would sing the songs I like, if the pastor would be more interesting to me, if church would be at a more convenient time for me, if worship were just arranged right for me, to suit me, to please me - then..." And then what does my sinful nature do? It latches on to Jesus and his forgiveness - as a license to keep on in my sin.

No, Jesus isn't the reason it's ok to blow off worshiping together. Jesus is the reason we do gather to worship together. Jesus invites us: **"Come to me all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest."** Jesus invites us to be together with him. And then Jesus calls us to be together with each other - **"Let us not give up meeting together as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage each other, and all the more as you see the day approaching."**

Why? If we're already forgiven and free, why invite us? Why call us together? Why? Jesus knows what we need - not just for ourselves but for each other. Jesus knows how we need to have sin and Satan put in their place, out of our lives. Jesus knows how we need to hear and share - "You are forgiven." Jesus knows how we need to have people encourage us - "Let us ever walk with Jesus." Jesus knows how we need a purpose bigger than ourselves. Jesus knows how good it is to have people sit with him and pray with him. And Jesus knows how God promises to give you his people his greatest blessings - through people sharing his Word together. Jesus knows. That's why Jesus invites us; that's why Jesus calls us; that's why we make time to be here - with Jesus. Amen.

THE SERVICE – SETTING 3

IN OUR WORLD TODAY ... time experts and life experts preach the value of pausing and resting.

IN OUR WORSHIP TODAY ... the Lord and Giver of Time shows the best way and the best reasons for us to pause and rest - with Him!

OPENING HYMN

*"Blessed Jesus, at Your Word"*

Hymn 919



1 Bless - ed Je - sus, at your Word we are gath - ered  
2 All our knowl - edge, sense, and sight lie in deep - est  
3 Gra - cious Sav - ior, good and kind, Light from Light, from  
4 Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost, praise to you and



all to hear you. Let our hearts and souls be stirred  
dark - ness shroud - ed till your Spir - it breaks our night  
God pro - ceed - ing, o - pen now our heart and mind;  
ad - o - ra - tion! Grant that we your Word may trust,



now to seek and love and fear you, by your teach - ings,  
with the beams of truth un - cloud - ed. You a - lone to  
help us by your Spir - it's plead - ing. Hear the cry your  
con - fi - dent of our sal - va - tion, while we here be -



sweet and ho - ly, drawn from earth to love you sole - ly.  
God can win us; you must work all good with - in us.  
Church now rais - es; hear and bless our prayers and prais - es.  
low must wan - der, till we sing your prais - es yon - der.

INVOCATION

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

CW 189

Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.  
**Blessed are they whose sin the Lord does not count against them.**

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

**Almighty and merciful Father,**

**we have strayed from your ways like lost sheep.**

**We have followed what we have devised and desired in our hearts.**

**We have offended you and sinned against your holy law.**

**We have done those things that we should not have done,**

**and we have not done those things that we should have done.**

**Have mercy on us, Lord!**

**Spare us, forgive us, and restore us,**

**according to your promises in Christ Jesus.**

God, our merciful Father, has forgiven all our sins. He sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to be our Redeemer and Savior. Jesus paid the penalty for our guilt by his death on the cross and freed us from death by his resurrection from the grave. We have peace with God now and forever.

**Amen.**

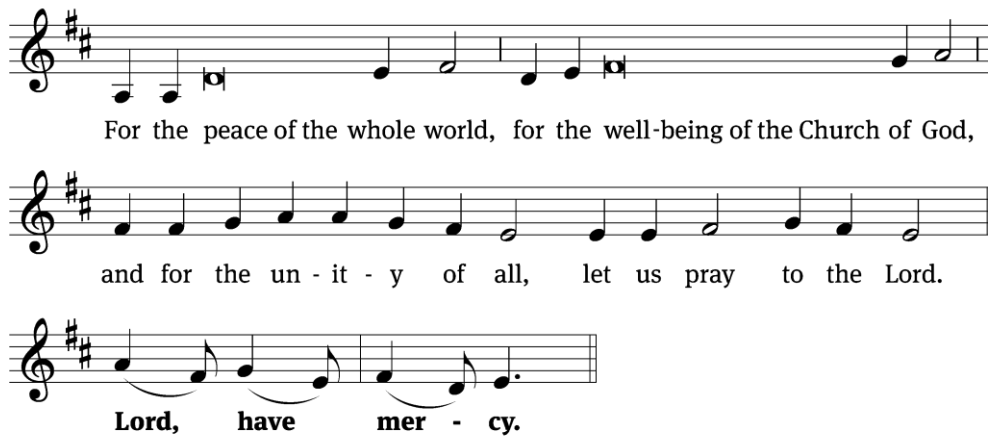
Lord, Have Mercy

CW 190

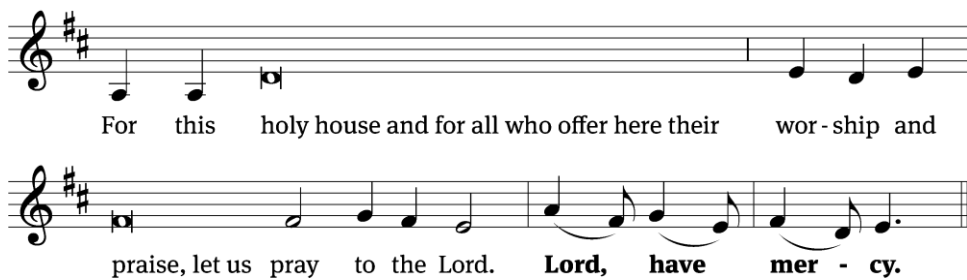
In peace let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**

For the peace from above and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.

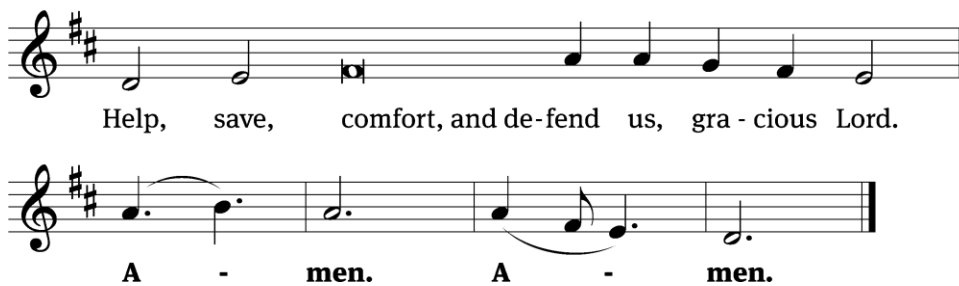
**Lord, have mer - cy.**



For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,  
and for the un - it - y of all, let us pray to the Lord.  
**Lord, have mer - cy.**



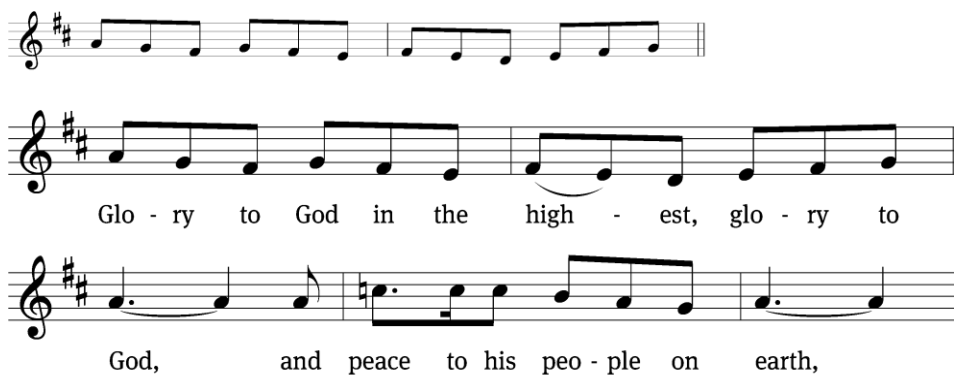
For this holy house and for all who offer here their wor - ship and  
praise, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.  
**A - men. A - men.**

**GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST**

**CW 191**




Glo - ry to God in the high - est, glo - ry to  
God, and peace to his peo - ple on earth,



and peace to his peo - ple on earth.



Lord God, heav - en - ly King, al - might - y God and




Fa - ther, we wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we




praise you for your glo - ry. Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly



Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,



you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on



us. You are seat - ed at the right hand of the




Fa - ther; re - ceive our prayer. For



you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the



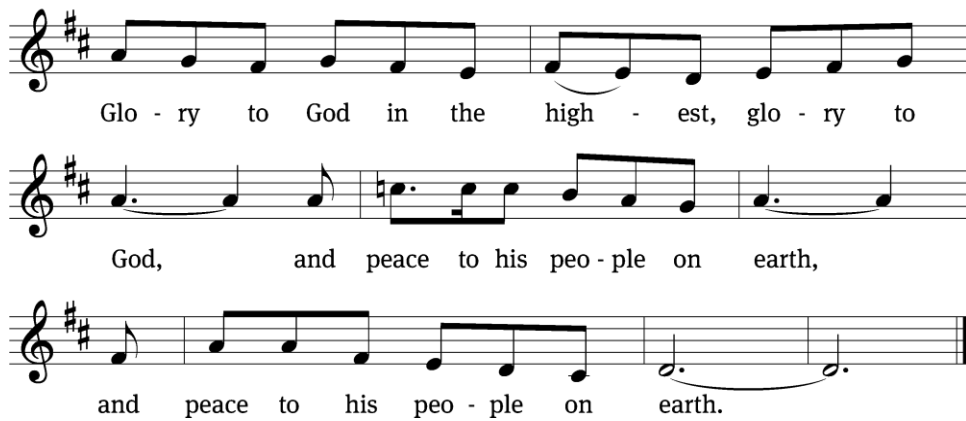
Lord, you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus



Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it in the



glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.



**PRAYER OF THE DAY** (from inside the cover of our Hymnal)

**For Peace**

O God of peace, I turn aside from an unquiet world, seeking rest for my spirit and light for my thoughts. I bring my work to be sanctified, my wounds to be healed, my sins to be forgiven, my hopes to be renewed. In you there is perfect harmony. Draw me to yourself, and silence the discords of my wasteful life. Your greatness is beyond my highest praise. Take me out of the loneliness of self, and fill me with the fullness of your peace. **Amen.**

**Before Worship**

Heavenly Father, I have come to worship you. Draw near to me in your gracious Word, and assure me of your loving kindness. Curb my wandering thoughts, that with undivided attention I may hear your voice and sing your praise. **Amen.**

**FIRST READING**

*Amos 8:4–12*

Hear this, you who trample the needy  
and do away with the poor of the land, saying,  
“When will the New Moon be over  
that we may sell grain,  
and the Sabbath be ended  
that we may market wheat?” —  
skimping on the measure,  
boosting the price  
and cheating with dishonest scales,  
buying the poor with silver

and the needy for a pair of sandals,  
selling even the sweepings with the wheat.

The LORD has sworn by himself, the Pride of Jacob: "I will never forget anything they have done.

"Will not the land tremble for this,  
and all who live in it mourn?  
The whole land will rise like the Nile;  
it will be stirred up and then sink  
like the river of Egypt.

"In that day," declares the Sovereign LORD,

"I will make the sun go down at noon  
and darken the earth in broad daylight.  
I will turn your religious festivals into mourning  
and all your singing into weeping.  
I will make all of you wear sackcloth  
and shave your heads.  
I will make that time like mourning for an only son  
and the end of it like a bitter day.

"The days are coming," declares the Sovereign LORD,  
"when I will send a famine through the land —  
not a famine of food or a thirst for water,  
but a famine of hearing the words of the LORD.  
People will stagger from sea to sea  
and wander from north to east,  
searching for the word of the LORD,  
but they will not find it."

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

PSALM OF THE DAY

*Psalm 62C*



1 My soul finds rest in God a-lone, my rock and my sal -  
 2 Find rest, my soul, in God a-lone a - mid the world's temp -  
 3 I'll set my gaze on God a-lone and trust in him com -



va - tion; a for - tress strong a - gainst my foes, and  
 ta - tions; when e - vil seeks to take a hold I'll  
 plete - ly; with ev - 'ry day pour out my soul and



I will not be shak - en. Though lips may bless and  
 cling to my sal - va - tion. Though rich - es come and  
 he will prove his mer - cy. Though life is but a



hearts may curse, and lies like ar - rows pierce me, I'll  
 rich - es go, don't set your heart up - on them; the  
 fleet - ing breath, a sigh too brief to mea - sure, my



fix my heart on right-eous-ness, I'll look to him who hears me.  
 fields of hope in which I sow are har-vest-ed in heav - en.  
 King has crushed the curse of death and I am his for - ev - er.

*Refrain*



O praise him, hal-le - lu - jah, my de-light and my re - ward;



ev - er - last - ing, nev - er fail - ing, my Re - deem - er, my God.

SECOND READING

*Hebrews 4:1-13 (Select)*

Therefore, since the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us be careful that none of you be found to have fallen short of it. For we also have had the good news proclaimed to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because they did not share the faith of those

who obeyed. Now we who have believed enter that rest, just as God has said,

“So I declared on oath in my anger, ‘They shall never enter my rest.’ “

Therefore since it still remains for some to enter that rest, and since those who formerly had the good news proclaimed to them did not go in because of their disobedience, God again set a certain day, calling it “Today.” ...

“Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts.”

For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken later about another day. There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God’s rest also rests from their works, just as God did from his. Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will perish by following their example of disobedience.

For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

#### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*Matthew 11:28*

Alleluia! “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.” Alleluia!

#### GOSPEL

*Luke 13:10–17*

On a Sabbath Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues, and a woman was there who had been crippled by a spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not straighten up at all. When Jesus saw her, he called her forward and said to her, “Woman, you are set free from your infirmity.” Then he put his hands on her, and immediately she straightened up and praised God.

Indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, the synagogue leader said to the people, “There are six days for work. So come and be healed on those days, not on the Sabbath.”

The Lord answered him, “You hypocrites! Doesn’t each of you on the Sabbath untie your ox or donkey from the stall and lead it out to give it

water? Then should not this woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has kept bound for eighteen long years, be set free on the Sabbath day from what bound her?"

When he said this, all his opponents were humiliated, but the people were delighted with all the wonderful things he was doing.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise be to you, O Christ!**

#### APOSTLES' CREED

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell.**

**The third day he rose again from the dead.**

**He ascended into heaven**

**and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.**

**From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy Christian Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

#### HYMN OF THE DAY

*"From High Atop the Mount"*

Hymn 635



A From high a - top the mount where Mo - ses stands,  
B Your life, O Christ, is count - ed as our own;



thro' cloud and storm the voice of God is heard:  
our guilt was cru - ci - fied in none but you.



"I am the LORD, and these are my com - mands.  
In keep - ing your com - mands our love is shown—



In all you do, o - bey my ev - 'ry word."  
now work with - in us both to will and do.

SERMON

HYMN

*"Behold a Host Arrayed in White"*

Hymn 883



1 Be - hold a host, ar - rayed in white, like thou - sand  
2 De - spised and scorned, they so - journed here; but now, how  
3 O bless - ed saints in bright ar - ray, now safe - ly



snow - clad moun - tains bright! With palms they stand; who is  
glo - rious they ap - pear! Those mar - tyrs stand, a priest -  
home in end - less day, ex - tol the Lord, who with



this band be - fore the throne of light? These are the  
ly band, God's throne for - ev - er near. So oft in  
his Word sus - tained you on the way. The steep and



saints of glo - rious fame, who from the great af - flic - tion  
trou - bled days gone by, in an - guish they would weep and  
nar - row path you trod; you toiled and sowed the Word a -



came and in the flood of Je - sus' blood are cleansed from  
sigh; at home a - bove the God of love for - e'er their  
broad; re - joice and bring your fruits and sing be - fore the



guilt and blame. Now gath - ered in the ho - ly place,  
tears shall dry. They now en - joy the Sab - bath rest,  
throne of God. Swing high your palms, lift up your song,



their voic - es they in wor - ship raise; their an - thems  
the heav'n - ly ban - quet of the blest; the Lamb, their  
yes, make it myr - iad voic - es strong! Let heav - en



rise where God re - sides, mid an - gels' songs of praise.  
Lord, at fes - tive board him - self is host and guest.  
ring— to Christ the King all praise and thanks be - long!

## OFFERING PRAYER

Almighty God, As we come before you with our offerings, we are reminded of our constant need for you in our lives. You are our provider, our sustainer, and our strength. Without you, we are nothing. May these gifts be a symbol of our dependence on you, acknowledging that all we have comes from your hand. Help us rely on you more fully in every aspect of our lives, trusting in your unfailing love and care. **Amen.**

## OFFERING

*If you prefer to give online, the code at the right will take you to our Online Giving page. We invite our online givers to join in our offering with an "I Give Online" card in the pew racks.*



## CHOIR

### *"In This World"* by Timothy Samelson

1. In this world, you will have trouble, troubles follow ev'ry day of your life. You will battle, against that world; you'll be bloodied by the constant strife; you'll be bloodied by the constant strife.

Refrain:

But my Shepherd has overcome all the world and He rules for me;  
Not the world, not the Devil, not this sinful selfish Me, but my Savior has overcome.

2. All your life, you will be tempted; Those attacks can come from anywhere.  
And the struggles will make you stronger; they will not exceed what you can bear; they will not exceed what you can bear.

Refrain:

But my Shepherd has overcome all the world and He rules for me;  
Not the world, not the Devil, not this sinful selfish Me, but my Savior has overcome.

Why put us through so much pain? To build up trust, to humble us.  
To kill our love of sin and self; to work His plan to finally take you home.

3. Life is full of great pain and sorrow; You may wonder if your God is there.  
But take comfort: the Cross and Easter is the proof you need that Jesus cares;  
Is the proof you need that Jesus cares;

Refrain:

But my Shepherd has overcome all the world and He rules for me;  
Not the world, not the Devil, not this sinful selfish Me, but my Savior has overcome.

### PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

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

#### **LORD'S PRAYER**

**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.**

#### **BLESSING**

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.**

#### **CLOSING HYMN**

***"Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah"***

**Hymn 923**

#### **Acknowledgments**

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