

# Ascension Lutheran Church

**Midweek Lenten Worship** ..... **March 17, 2021**

**Welcome, All, In the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord!**

*Light a candle.*

## **CALL TO WORSHIP**

Before we were born,

**Before we took our first breath,**

Before the week started,

**Before the year started,**

Before we said, "I love you,"

**Before we said, "I'm sorry,"**

Before we figured out who we really are,

**Before we figured out who we want to be,**

Before it all—

**God loved us.**

Unconditionally and freely,

**Fully and honestly—**

God loved us.

**Again and again, this is where our story begins.**

Let us worship God!

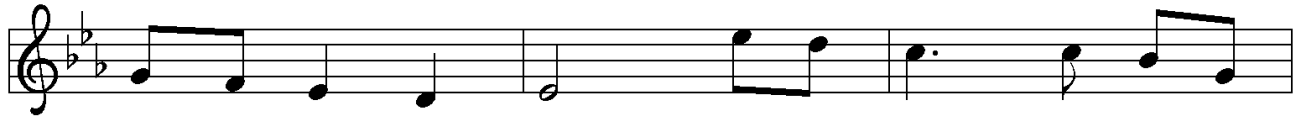
**HYMN OF LIGHT #561** ..... **"Joyous Light of Heavenly Glory"**



1 Joy - ous light of heav'n-ly glo - ry, lov-ing glow of God's own  
2 In the stars that grace the dark - ness, in the blaz - ing sun of  
3 You who made the heav-en's splen - dor, ev - 'ry danc - ing star of



face, you who sing cre - a - tion's sto - ry, shine on  
 dawn, in the light of peace and wis - dom, we can  
 night, make us shine with gen - tle jus - tice, let us



ev - 'ry land and race. Now as eve - ning falls a -  
 hear your qui - et song. Love that fills the night with  
 each re - flect your light. Might - y God of all cre -



round us, we shall raise our songs to you. God of day - break,  
 won - der, love that warms the wea - ry soul, love that bursts all  
 a - tion, gen - tle Christ who lights our way, lov - ing Spir - it



God of shad - ows, come and light our hearts a - new.  
 chains a - sun - der, set us free and make us whole.  
 of sal - va - tion, lead us on to end - less day.

Text: Greek hymn, 3rd cent., para. Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Music: JOYOUS LIGHT, Marty Haugen

Text and music © 1987 GIA Publications, Inc., 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358.

All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

## **PRAYER**

God of the here and now—

We have heard the words,

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only son,”

Time and time again.

We have read them on billboards,

Heard them in worship,

And seen them on signs.

And yet we know,  
There is a difference between hearing those words in passing  
And truly, deeply listening.  
We long to listen, God.  
We long to hear your truth.  
We long to know your love.  
Open our hearts and minds. We are listening.  
**Amen.**

**PSALMODY: Psalm 107:1-16**

*God gives food and light*

- <sup>1</sup> O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;  
for his steadfast love endures forever.
- <sup>2</sup> Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, those he redeemed from trouble
- <sup>3</sup> and gathered in from the lands, from the east and from the west,  
from the north and from the south.
- <sup>4</sup> Some wandered in desert wastes, finding no way to an inhabited town;
- <sup>5</sup> hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted within them.
- <sup>6</sup> Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,  
and he delivered them from their distress;
- <sup>7</sup> he led them by a straight way, until they reached an inhabited town.
- <sup>8</sup> Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love,  
for his wonderful works to humankind.
- <sup>9</sup> For he satisfies the thirsty, and the hungry he fills with good things.
- <sup>10</sup> Some sat in darkness and in gloom, prisoners in misery and in irons,
- <sup>11</sup> for they had rebelled against the words of God,  
and spurned the counsel of the Most High.
- <sup>12</sup> Their hearts were bowed down with hard labor;  
they fell down, with no one to help.
- <sup>13</sup> Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,  
and he saved them from their distress;
- <sup>14</sup> he brought them out of darkness and gloom,  
and broke their bonds asunder.
- <sup>15</sup> Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love,  
for his wonderful works to humankind.

<sup>16</sup> For he shatters the doors of bronze, and cuts in two the bars of iron.

**READING: Job 11:7-9**

<sup>7</sup> “Can you find out the deep things of God?  
Can you find out the limit of the Almighty?  
<sup>8</sup> It is higher than heaven—what can you do?  
Deeper than Sheol—what can you know?  
<sup>9</sup> Its measure is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea.

The Word of the Lord.  
Thanks be to God.

**HYMN #588** ..... **“There’s a Wideness in God’s Mercy”**



1 There’s a wide-ness in God’s mer - cy, like the wide-ness of the sea;  
2 There is wel - come for the sin - ner, and a prom - ised grace made good;  
3 For the love of God is broad - er than the mea - sures of our mind;  
4 ’Tis not all we owe to Je - sus; it is some - thing more than all:



there’s a kind - ness in God’s jus - tice which is more than lib - er - ty.  
there is mer - cy with the Sav - ior; there is heal - ing in his blood.  
and the heart of the E - ter - nal is most won - der - ful - ly kind.  
great - er good be - cause of e - vil, larg - er mer - cy through the fall.



There is no place where earth’s sor - rows are more felt than up in heav’n.  
There is grace e - nough for thou - sands of new worlds as great as this;  
But we make this love too nar - row by false lim - its of our own;  
Make our love, O God, more faith - ful; let us take you at your word,



There is no place where earth’s fail - ings have such kind - ly judg - ment giv’n.  
there is room for fresh cre - a - tions in that up - per home of bliss.  
and we mag - ni - fy its strict - ness with a zeal God will not own.  
and our lives will be thanks - giv - ing for the good - ness of the Lord.

**REFLECTION**

**The Rev. Christina Auch**

**HYMN #723**

**“Canticle of the Turning”**



1 My soul cries out with a joy - ful shout that the  
 2 Though I am small, my . . . God, my all, you . . .  
 3 From the halls of pow'r to the for - tress tow'r, not a  
 4 Though the na - tions rage from . . age to age, we re -



God of my heart is great, and my spir - it sings of the  
 work great . . things in me, and your mer - cy will last from the  
 stone will be left on stone. Let the king be - ware for your  
 mem - ber who holds us fast: God's mer - cy must de -



won - drous things that you bring to the ones who wait.  
 depths of the past to the end of the age to be.  
 jus - tice tears ev - 'ry ty - rant . . . from his throne.  
 liv - er us from the con - quer - or's crush - ing grasp.



You fixed your sight on your ser - vant's plight, and my  
 Your ver - y name puts the proud to shame, and to  
 The hun - gry poor shall . . weep no more, for the  
 This sav - ing word that our fore - bears heard is the



weak - ness you did not spurn, so from east to west shall my  
 those who would for you yearn, you will show your might, put the  
 food they can nev - er earn; there are ta - bles spread, ev - 'ry  
 prom - ise which holds us bound, till the spear and rod can be



name be blest. Could the world be a - bout to turn?  
 strong to flight, for the world is a - bout to turn.  
 mouth be fed, for the world is a - bout to turn.  
 crushed by God, who is turn - ing the world a - round.



*Refrain*  
 My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your jus - tice burn.



Wipe a - way all tears, for the dawn draws near, and the world is a - bout to turn.

Text: Rory Cooney, b. 1952, based on the Magnificat  
 Music: STAR OF COUNTY DOWN, Irish traditional  
 Text © 1990 GIA Publications, Inc., 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358.  
 All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

## **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

We believe God is love—  
 Unconditional, constant love.  
 We believe this love exists for all,  
 Choosing each and every one of us,  
 Day after day,  
 Again and again and again.

We believe that God’s love is like a river.  
 Rivers cannot help but flow toward the sea;  
 God’s love cannot help but move toward us.  
 We are swimming in it.

We believe that God loved first.  
 We believe that God breathed life into dust.  
 We believe that God said, “This is good,”  
 And because we believe that God loved first,  
 We strive to build lives that reflect God’s love.

May we begin again here.

**Amen.**

### **BENEDICTION**

As you leave this space,

May your mouth speak of God's goodness.

May your arms hold those in need.

May your feet walk toward justice.

May your heart trust its worth.

May your soul dance in God's grace.

And may this be your rhythm—

Again and again and again,

Until God's promised day.

In the name of the Lover, the Beloved, and Love itself,

Go with courage, go with heart, go in peace.

**Amen.**

Music from sundaysandseasons.com. Copyright © 2021 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.  
Prayers by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org. Used with Permission.