

# INDEPENDENCE DAY

Mightier Than the Thorn

July 4, 2021



## AS WE GATHER

Today, our nation celebrates its place as the land of the free and the home of the brave. At times, this reality causes us to thump our chest to let the world know how great we are. The apostle Paul, too, could claim his place among the greats. Paul was “circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness, under the law blameless. But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ” (Philippians 3:5–7). Yet, he was not mightier than the thorn. As Paul followed Jesus, he was plagued by a thorn in the flesh to keep him from becoming conceited. He asked God to take it away, and God said, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness” (2 Corinthians 12:9). So, too, God’s grace is sufficient for us no matter where this life takes us, because when we are weak, then we are strong.

### ✧ PREPARATION ✧

#### **PRAYERS OF PREPARATION:**

Gracious God, we come to you with hearts that need to be opened to your word and your love. There is so much around us that tears at us and causes us to tremble. Keep us ever mindful of your presence and the hope that you have given us in your Son Jesus Christ. Guide us, we pray, as your church, struggling to spread the good news. Keep us focused on the mission and ministry to which you have called us and lead us forward. We know, Lord, that there will often be bumps and holes in the road along the way. Save us from dwelling on them and make us secure in the goals you have placed before us. Loving God, we lift up our hearts to you, on this day of celebration, in gratitude for the gift of being here today. We rejoice with all those who share in the great dream of freedom and dignity for all, because we are all made in your image. We honor those who have sacrificed, that we might have the chance to live in freedom to worship you and serve humanity with our God-given gifts. As we deny all prejudice a place in our

hearts, may we also clearly declare our intention to work for the time when all people are granted equal dignity and worth. Come, O gracious God, who led your children Israel from slavery—set us free from all that might hold us in bondage. We praise you, our eternal security, the One in whom we place our trust. Amen.

### **HOLY COMMUNION IS CELEBRATED:**

As a Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS) church, we believe and confess that through the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper we receive the true body and blood of Christ in, with, and under the elements of bread and wine. As we commune with faith and repentance, we receive the forgiveness of sins and power to amend our sinful lives. If you confess the same belief, we invite you to our fellowship of the Lord’s Supper.

### **WELCOME:**

**WELCOME TO GOD’S HOUSE....** Come rejoice, all you who love and serve the Lord! Sing songs and hymns of praise; celebrate together in God’s presence! For the word of the Lord holds true forever, and everything he does is worthy of our trust. We are so glad that you have chosen to worship with us today, on a day that we look back and celebrate our freedom as Americans! It’s a time to give thanks in humility for the amazing gifts God has bestowed on us, including freedom and security, and to give thanks for God’s eternal security. Men and women have given their lives over the years so that you and I can enjoy the freedom we know, as well as the freedom to be here today to worship God together. Welcome to Church!

**SELECTION     Minister Terry Dale**

### **INVOCATION**

**Pastor:**        In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
**People:**        **Amen.**

**OPENING SENTENCES**    *1 Corinthians 10:12–13; Hebrews 4:15–16*

**Pastor:**        Therefore, let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man.  
**People:**        **God is faithful, and He will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation He will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.**

**Pastor:** For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

**People:** **Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.**

## **CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION**      *Philippians 1:6; 2:7–8*

**Pastor:** Most merciful God,

**People:** **we confess to You our pride, arrogance, and boasting. Forgive us for all our sins in our thoughts, words, and works for the sake of Jesus, who “made Himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”**

**Pastor:** In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us. For Jesus’ sake, as a called and ordained servant of Christ, I forgive you for all of your sins of thoughts, words, and works in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People:** **Amen.**

**Pastor:** And I am sure of this, that He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

**People:** **Amen.**

### **✠ WORD ✠**

## **HYMN OF PRAISE**      **“God Bless Our Native Land” TLH 577**

1 God bless our native land! Firm may she ever stand thro' storm and night!  
When the wild tempests rave, Ruler of wind and wave, do Thou our country save  
by Thy great might.

2 For her our prayer 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! Amen.

## **SALUTATION**

**Pastor:** The Lord be with you.

**People:** **And also with you.**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**Pastor:** Let us pray.

**People:** **Gracious and ever-loving God, we thank and praise You for the freedom we have in You and also the freedom we celebrate today in our nation.**

**Pastor:** As Your grace has been sufficient for Your people throughout all time, grant that it be sufficient for us as well for Your power is made perfect in our weaknesses;

**People:** **through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

**OLD TESTAMENT READING**    *Isaiah 61:1–7*    (From shame to joy)

**Leader:** This is the Word of the Lord.

**People:** **Thanks be to God.**

**SELECTION**    **Minister Terry Dale**

**EPISTLE**    *2 Corinthians 12:1–10*    (Paul boasts in his weaknesses.)

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

**VERSE**      *Luke 22:26*

Leader: Alleluia. Let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves. But I am among you as the one who serves. Alleluia.

**HOLY GOSPEL**      *Luke 22:24–30*      (The one who serves is the greatest.)

Leader: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the twenty-second chapter.

People: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

(The Gospel is read.)

Leader: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: **Praise to You, O Christ.**

**SELECTION**      Minister Terry Dale

**SERMON**

**SELECTION**      Minister Terry Dale

**(We Bring Our Tithes and Offering To the Lord)**

**CATECHISM**      *The Fourth Commandment; The Fourth Petition*

Leader: Honor your father and your mother. What does this mean?

People: **We should fear and love God so that we do not despise or anger our parents and other authorities, but honor them, serve and obey them, love and cherish them.**

Leader: Give us this day our daily bread. What does this mean?

**People:** God certainly gives daily bread to everyone without our prayers, even to all evil people, but we pray in this petition that God would lead us to realize this and to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving.

**Leader:** What is meant by daily bread?

**People:** Daily bread includes everything that has to do with the support and needs of the body, such as food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, home, land, animals, money, goods, a devout husband or wife, devout children, devout workers, devout and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, self-control, good reputation, good friends, faithful neighbors, and the like.

## PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

**Leader:** Let us pray for the whole people of God and all people according to their needs.

Almighty and most holy God, we thank and praise You for all You provide us freely by Your grace. We are especially thankful for the freedoms we enjoy and celebrate today as we gather to worship You. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People:** hear our prayer.

**Leader:** We pray for the leaders of our nation, state, and community, [*especially . . .*]. We acknowledge that You have placed them in these positions to govern us and all people of this land. Grant them wisdom and lead them to make decisions that are in line with Your will for all people. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People:** hear our prayer.

**Leader:** Amid the thorns of this life, we lean on Your grace, knowing that it is sufficient for us and in our weakness Your strength shines through. We ask for Your grace and healing for those who grieve, [*especially . . .*]. We ask for Your grace and healing for those struggling in body, mind, and spirit, [*especially . . .*]. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People:**     **hear our prayer.**

**Leader:**     We live in a nation and in communities where we are thankful to have brothers and sisters in Christ, yet there are also many who have either disconnected from You and Your Church or who have never known You. Lead us to share Your grace with others. Guide our conversations and grow our relationships with those who do not share the hope we have. Lord, in Your mercy,

**People:**     **hear our prayer.**

**Leader:**     No matter where life takes us, we know we are in Your hands. So, we confidently come before You as Your children and place these prayers and all our concerns into Your gracious hands, in Jesus' name.

**People:**     **Amen.**

✠ **SACRAMENT** ✠

**PREFACE**     *2 Timothy 4:22*

**Pastor:**     The Lord be with you.

**People:**     **And also with you.**

**Pastor:**     Lift up your hearts.

**People:**     **We lift them to the Lord.**

**Pastor:**     Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**People:**     **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

**PROPER PREFACE**

**Pastor:**     It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who on this day overcame death and the grave and by His glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the

company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and singing:

**SANCTUS** "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty" (TLH 246 Sts. 1)

1. Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty! Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee; Holy holy, holy, merciful and mighty! God in Three Persons, blessed Trinity!

**LORD'S PRAYER** *Matthew 6:9–13*

**THE WORDS OF OUR LORD** *Matthew 26:26–28; Mark 14:22–24; Luke 22:19–20; 1 Corinthians 11:23–25*

**PAX DOMINI**

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

People: **Amen.**

**DISTRIBUTION**

**POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING**

Pastor: Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good.

People: **His steadfast love endures forever.**

Pastor: Let us pray.

People: **We thank You, Lord, for You have again fed and nourished us on our way through this world to the one to come. Guide us in living out Your grace until that day when we experience it in all of its fullness; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

**BENEDICTION** *Numbers 6:24–26*

Pastor: The Lord be with you all. The blessing of almighty God—the Father, the ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit—abide with you, now and forever.

People: **Amen.**



**HYMN“Lift Every Voice and Sing” TFBF 296 Sts. 1 & 3**

1 Lift ev'ry voice and sing till earth and heaven ring, ring with the harmonies of liberty. Let our rejoicing rise high as the list'ning skies, let it resound loud as the rolling sea. Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us; sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us; facing the rising sun of our new day begun, let us march on till victory is won.

3 God of our weary years, God of our silent tears, thou who hast brought us thus far on the way; thou who hast by thy might led us into the light, keep us forever in the path, we pray. Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met thee; lest, our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we forget thee; shadowed beneath thy hand, may we forever stand, true to our God, true to our native land.

*One  
Nation  
Under God*

**Members, we need your help to call and encourage our members to join us for Divine Worship every Sunday.**