

Wynkoop: Dedicated hymn to explain it a little bit. And to let you sing it together with the choir in the side aisles. Hymn 324: Hail Thee Festival Day. A setting by Ralph Von Williams. What's complicated about it is really mostly the layout on the page; there is a refrain which we sing at the beginning, at the end, and between every set of verses. So, I'd like to have us sing that refrain first. Hail thee festival day, blessed day to be hallowed forever. And then the text that is notated as Easter Text, where the Easter season is not yet complete. The day when our Lord was raised, breaking the kingdom of death. Can we sing that, please? (peaceful organ music) And ready, go! ♪ Hail thee festival day ♪ ♪ Blessed day to be hallowed forever ♪ ♪ Day when our Lord was raised ♪ ♪ Breaking the kingdom of death ♪

Wynkoop: And now comes the complicated part. Verses one, three, and five begin in the next measure, but verses two, four, and six begin over on the right-hand page. And there are three different versions of verse one. We need to use, again, the Easter Text for verse one, and the Easter Text for verse two. And after that we'll go to verse three on the left-hand page and verse four on the right-hand page, and so forth. With a refrain between every verse. Anybody confused yet? (congregation laughing) Now, just to make it sort of, sporting, we thought we would divide the congregation and the choir into two. So that nobody has to do all of the verses. And nobody has to learn both of the melodies. Because the melodies are different for verses one, three, five. So we're going to ask this side, the left side of the congregation, to sing verses one, three, and five when they come; and this side, the right side, to sing stanzas two, four, and six when they come. Now, the right side has a little bit harder music. But we thought the right side just looked more musically 'with it' this morning. (congregation laughing) So, what I'd like to suggest is that we try that now with singing the refrain again and then going into Easter verse one with the left side, sing the refrain, and then Easter verse two with the right side. From Hail Thee Festival, ready, go! ♪ Hail thee festival day ♪ ♪ Blessed day to be hallowed forever ♪

- Sing it lustfully, loudly! ♪ Day when our Lord was raised ♪ ♪ Breaking the kingdom of death ♪

- Okay, all the fair beauty. ♪ All the fair beauty of earth ♪ ♪ From the death of the winter arising ♪ ♪ Every good gift of the year ♪ ♪ Now with its Master returns ♪

- Everybody, refrain, Hail thee! ♪ Hail thee festival day ♪ ♪ Blessed day to be hallowed forever ♪ ♪ Day when our Lord was raised ♪ ♪ Breaking the kingdom of death ♪

- Rise from the grave. ♪ Rise from the grave now oh Lord ♪ ♪ The author of life and creation ♪

- Treading. ♪ Treading the pathway of death ♪ ♪ New life you give to us all ♪

- And everybody, refrain! ♪ Hail thee festival day ♪ ♪ Blessed day to be hallowed forever ♪

Wynkoop: Day when our Lord was raised. ♪ Day when our Lord was raised ♪ ♪ Breaking the kingdom of death ♪

- And let's stop. Good start, and now just remember, that the next thing that happens is verse three. And not one of those other verse ones. God the almighty, the Lord, from the left side. Isn't it going to be fun? (congregation laughing) Let us worship God with good humor as well as good music as we tackle this complicated hymn.

- Thank you, Doctor Wynkoop. There are congregations that couldn't handle that hymn, but you're not one of them, I'm sure. (congregation laughing) We're delighted here, for the worship of God on this third Sunday of Easter. And we do thank our choir. As their last Sunday here before next fall. They have meant so much to us this year. This afternoon at four o'clock there's going to be a magnificent concert by our choir here in the Chapel, and we invite you all to be back for that. Four o'clock today; you're going to get a taste of some of the glorious music that they will be singing. It'll be in the service today. And now let us stand for the greeting. Let me just remind you, it's not printed in the bulletin, but as every Sunday, we will have communion in Memorial Chapel at the close of the service. Christ is risen!

Congregation: He is risen indeed!

- Glory and honor, dominion and power be to God forever and ever.

Congregation: Christ is risen, hallelujah! (peaceful organ music) ♪ Hail thee festival day ♪ ♪ Blessed day to be hallowed forever ♪ ♪ Day when our Lord was raised ♪ ♪ Breaking the kingdom of death ♪ ♪ All the fair beauty of earth ♪ ♪ From the death of the winter arising ♪ ♪ Every good gift of the year ♪ ♪ Now with its Master returns ♪ ♪ Hail thee festival day ♪ ♪ Blessed day to be hallowed forever ♪ ♪ Day when our Lord was raised ♪ ♪ Breaking the kingdom of death ♪ ♪ Rise from the grave now oh Lord ♪ ♪ The author of life and creation ♪ ♪ Treading the pathway of death ♪ ♪ New life you give to us all ♪ ♪ Hail thee festival day ♪ ♪ Blessed day to be hallowed forever ♪ ♪ Day when our Lord was raised ♪ ♪ Breaking the kingdom of death ♪ ♪ God the Almighty the Lord ♪ ♪ The Ruler of earth and the heavens ♪ ♪ Guard us from harm without ♪ ♪ Cleanse us from evil within ♪ ♪ Hail thee festival day ♪ ♪ Blessed day to be hallowed forever ♪ ♪ Day when our Lord was raised ♪ ♪ Breaking the kingdom of death ♪ ♪ Jesus the health of the world ♪ ♪ Enlighten our minds great Redeemer ♪ ♪ Son of the Father supreme ♪ ♪ Only begotten of God ♪ ♪ Hail thee festival day ♪ ♪ Blessed day to be hallowed forever ♪ ♪ Day when our Lord was raised ♪ ♪ Breaking the kingdom of death ♪ ♪ Spirit of life and of power ♪ ♪ Now flow in us fount of our being ♪ ♪ Light that enlightens us all ♪ ♪ Life that in all may abide ♪ ♪ Hail thee festival day ♪ ♪ Blessed day to be hallowed forever ♪ ♪ Day when our Lord was raised ♪ ♪ Breaking the kingdom of death ♪ ♪ Praise to the giver of good ♪ ♪ Oh lover and author of concord ♪ ♪ Pour out your balm on our days ♪ ♪ Order our ways in your peace ♪ ♪ Hail thee festival day ♪ ♪ Blessed day to be hallowed forever ♪ ♪ Day when our Lord was raised ♪ ♪ Breaking the kingdom of death ♪ (joyous organ music)

- Oh God, who's blessed Son made himself known to us in the breaking of bread. Surprise us this day. Take from us the presumption that leans on our strength instead of Yours, that mistakes our wisdom for Yours, and equates our will with Yours. Use our troubled, questioning spirits to open the eyes of our faith, that we

might not only see Jesus in our midst, but that we might discern the true meaning of Your word. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with You in the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever, amen.

- Let us pray together, the Prayer For Illumination.

Congregation: Open our hearts and minds, oh God, by the power of Your Holy Spirit, so that as the Word is read and proclaimed, we may hear Your message with joy this day, amen.

- The first lesson is taken from the Book of Acts, the third chapter beginning with the 12th verse. When Peter saw it, that is, the healing of the blind man, he addressed the people, "You Israelites, "why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us? "As though by our own power or piety we had made him walk. "The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, "the God of our ancestors, has glorified His servant Jesus "whom you handed over and rejected "in the presence of Pilate, though he had decided "to release him; but you rejected the holy "and righteous one, and asked to have a murderer "given to you; and you killed the author of life, "whom God raised from the dead. "To this we are witnesses. "And by faith in His name, His name itself "has made this man strong, whom you see and know. "And the faith that is through Jesus "has given him this perfect health "in the presence of all of you. "And now, friends, I know that you acted in ignorance, "as did also your rulers. "In this way, God fulfilled what he had foretold "through all the prophets, that His messiah would suffer. "Repent therefore, and turn to God "so that your sins may be wiped out." This is the word of the Lord.

Congregation: Praise be to God.

- The Psalm appointed for this Sunday is number 133, found on page 850 in your Hymnal. Please rise, as we sing both the Psalm and the Gloria, responsively. (peaceful organ music) ♪ Behold how good and pleasant it is ♪ ♪ When we live together in unity ♪ ♪ It is like the precious oil on the head ♪ ♪ Running down on the beard ♪ ♪ On the beard of Aaron ♪ ♪ Running down on the collar of his robes ♪ ♪ It is like the dew of Hermon ♪ ♪ Which falls on the mountains of Zion ♪ ♪ For there the Lord has commanded the blessing ♪ ♪ Life forevermore ♪ ♪ Oh glory be to you Creator ♪ ♪ And to Jesus Christ our savior ♪ ♪ Thanks to the Holy Spirit blessed is thee ♪ ♪ As it was ere time began ♪ ♪ Is now and will be forevermore ♪

Psalm Reader: Please be seated. (joyous organ music) (harmonious organ and choral music) (joyous organ music) (harmonious organ and choral music) (joyous organ music) (harmonious organ and choral music) (joyous organ music) (harmonious organ and choral music) (joyous organ music)

- I received a letter from someone who was in last Sunday's service. The letter began: Being at the chapel last Sunday and hearing your sermon reminded me why I don't go to church. And after that the letter got uncomplimentary. (congregation laughing) Why are you here? Why do you go to church? I often ask myself that as I look out on you on Sunday morning. Why are they here? I suppose that is the most frequent question I receive from first-time visitors here, when they see all of you and they ask me, "Well, why are they here?" I always say, "Well, they appreciate good preaching." And then they say, "No, no, why are they here?" Now, I wasn't born yesterday. I know that many of you are here for less than theological reasons. Say, you're

16 years old, and because your mother doesn't believe in democracy, you're here. You were made to be here. We parents sometimes work out our parental inability to control you on Saturday night by controlling you on Sunday morning. "Why do I have to go to church?" the child asks. Well, because you live in this house, and you don't make mortgage payments. That's why you have to go to church. But that's hardly a theological explanation. Now, I know that there are others of you who may be here because although church is not your cup of tea, church means much to somebody whom you love. She thinks church is a good idea, and you think she is a good idea, and so, you're here. Now, I suppose the day is long passed when anybody is here because it will help you in business. Or to 'be seen' at church. It's been a long time since the right people, the people on top, were in church. Habit? Childhood holdover? Or why-ever you're here, I want you to know, from me, it doesn't bother me a bit that you may be here for less than theological reasons. Because as a preacher, I take you as I get you. Furthermore, I think that one of the major reasons that I'm here as your preacher is to help you name why you're here. To help you theologically to articulate the reasons beneath your stated reasons for being here. 'Cause as Augustine once said, "Sometimes... "the real reasons "are better than the reasons that you know." Now, today's Gospel lesson occurs on a Sunday. It occurs on an Easter Sunday. The grieving disciples are gathered just like we're gathered today. And what happens then is a shock. Hear today's Gospel, from the 24th Chapter of Luke. Jesus himself stood among them and he said, "Peace be with you." And they were startled and terrified. They thought they were seeing a ghost. He said to them, "Why are you frightened? "And why do doubts arise in your hearts? "Look at my hands and my feet. "See it is myself. "Touch me and see. "For a ghost does not have flesh and bones "as you see that I have." And when He had said this, He showed them His hands. He showed them His feet. While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, He said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" They gave Him a piece of broiled fish and He took it and ate it in their presence. Then He said to them, "These are my words "that I spoke to you while I was still with you. "That everything written about me in the Law of Moses, "in the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. And He said, "Thus it is written, "that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead "on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness "of sins is to be proclaimed. "In His name to all nations beginning from Jerusalem, "and you, "you are witnesses to these things." This is the Word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

- Now, I want to walk you through this Bible story, because I'm convinced that this is your story. This is you, on Sunday morning. I believe that this story is a kind of a parable, a revelation of us at worship. This happened on a Sunday. First, what, what is the catalyst for the story? Jesus stood among them and said, "Peace." Sunday happens whenever Jesus comes and stands among us. Now, I know this cuts against some of the reasons that you thought you were here. We've been conditioned to think that worship is mostly about us. Titillation of my feelings, meeting of my needs, answering of my questions. No. There's a popular expression today in the Church Growth Movement which speaks of the need to create 'User Friendly Churches'. That church is mostly here for the meeting of peoples' 'felt needs', as they say. Me. Me. Me. We think worship begins about 11 o'clock, when we all get here. No, worship's true beginning is whenever Jesus gets here. When He stands among us, when He speaks to us. We're here because we've been called, we've been convened. I know that you may think you're here out of a sense of personal duty, or because your mother dragged you here to please your boyfriend, or get a psychological boost for the rest of the week.

Forget it, you're here, even if you didn't know that's why you're here because Jesus has graciously called you. It's His presence that makes worship, not yours. It's His presence; I suppose if Jesus had not come and stood among them that day, they would've just gotten together, and they would've grieved, they'd of had a little memorial service, they'd of all gone back home. But no, Jesus came and stood among them. And there was worship. When Jesus gets here, that's when it's worship. This is what differentiates church from Rotary. This is why this is not a pep rally for the denomination's latest social crusade, or group grope therapy, or the League of Women Voters. It's Jesus; He comes, He stands among us. Easter is what makes all this happen. And I stress this because in the modern world, particularly in the modern academic world, we're often inept at naming our lives, theologically. If you feel a tug on your innermost heart, you call it heartburn. Or a mild bout with depression. You feel something is missing in your life. You go out to Blockbuster and rent a video. When you celebrate, you pour yourself a drink. When you've got a deep, deep question about yourself, you call in to Doctor Joe Graydon on Saturday morning. So quite naturally, it's easy to get confused. It's easy to get the impression that all this is about you. No; like the story says, Sunday starts when Jesus comes, stands among us and says, "Peace." Now, I would secondly have you note the disciples reaction. Maybe you always thought it was like good news when Jesus gets here. No, look at their reaction in the story. No, they were startled, and they were terrified. And they thought they were seeing a ghost. Someone emerged from the Chapel during Holy Week, said indignantly, "I come to church to feel better, "to receive a lift for the week. "Now I'm leaving depressed and down." She asked for her dollar back. (congregation laughing) But you will notice, if you've been here on past Sundays, like in the Easter Scriptures we've been reading, you will notice that one of the weird things about the Gospel stories of Easter is that on that first Easter there were a few people who felt unadulterated joy that dead Jesus had come back to them and stood among them and spoke to them as the risen Christ. You see it right here, they were startled, they were terrified, they didn't know what to think. And I suppose, as your preacher I should be asking myself right now: when is the last time I've preached a sermon that terrified somebody in church? It's sort of startling that I ever, I hardly ever get startled reactions to my preaching. Now, I've noticed that I seem to get more startled reactions like when I'm preaching at Baccalaureate services. End of the school year, everybody gathers here, parents, grandparents, and we have a service. Thank the Lord we're graduating. But I seem to get a high percentage of negative reactions. And I wonder why, and I wonder if it's that maybe at a Baccalaureate service you get a high percentage of people who've never been in church in their lives. Maybe they've come for a show or a pretty ceremony. They don't come to be startled or terrified, much less, to think. It takes sort of, training, to know how to appropriate what goes on here on Sunday morning. As we said, worship begins when Jesus arrives. And when the risen Christ stands among us, as those of you who've been here on previous Sundays may testify, anything can happen. Sometimes you do feel joy. Sometimes you do feel a sense of peace to help you make it through the week. But I bet there have been occasions when you've been startled, when you've been terrified. As the Psalmist says, it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of a living God. It's an easy thing to fall in the hands of a dead God. But a living God who comes back to us on Easter, oh, that's a fearful thing! And so Jesus asked his people, "Why are you frightened?" That's what he asked the disciples. "Why are you frightened? "Why do doubts arise in your hearts?" And I want a number of you to note, that at the first Easter, even with the risen Christ standing right there in front of them, there were a lot of people there who doubted. And I say this because I know that there's some of you out there this morning who doubt. And you think that because you doubt, maybe you're not supposed to be here. Would you please note, right here, first Easter, the 12 people who'd spent the most time with Jesus, they doubted. What

makes us any better at believing than those disciples? There is doubt. But then would you note that, if you doubt, if maybe you're here this morning desiring visible, tangible proof, well, in a way you've come to the right place, says this story. If you will note, Jesus doesn't rebuke anybody for their doubt. Rather, he gives these doubters what they need in order to believe. You need physical, tangible, empirical proof? Okay, touch me and see. Here are my hands and my feet. Give me that fish over there; let me eat it. A willingness to focus on something other than yourself and your needs. An eagerness to be startled. A willingness to be shocked. To admit to your doubts. These are, according to the story from Luke, Sunday morning prerequisites. Luke says that Jesus gave His startled, terrified, doubting disciples what they needed. So this means that you can go ahead. You can go ahead and come as you are on Sunday morning. He'll give you what you need. He doesn't rebuke us for the wrong reasons. He doesn't rebuke us for the desire not to doubt. He gives us what we need. And that's important. 'Cause sometimes the things of faith seem so amorphous, they seem so vague, you can't get your hands around them. But you come here, you come here to this big, beautiful, solid-stone of this building. Or you look upon the faces of the choir as they're singing. You hear the rumbling music of the organ. Or maybe you pick up something in the words of the hymn, and you are given the visible, tangible reassurance that you need; you believe. Sometimes we try to out-spiritualize Jesus. By that I mean, we act like, I run into people and they say, "I'm not very religious; I don't feel close to God." What do you do? When have you tried to be close to God? Physical closeness is important. To touch, to see, to feel, this is a very material kind of religion. He doesn't leave us out there with faith, just something floating around in our minds, an idea. You come here to stuff you can touch and see and feel. And then Luke says, "He opened their minds "to understand the Scriptures." He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. And I love that. Now, I know that many of you here are educated, intelligent people, and you like to think of yourself as already being open-minded. Madonna having relations with small animals, don't you think that's terrible? Well, being at Duke, I do try to keep an open mind about those things. No, Luke says, "Jesus came and stood among them." In their worship, and He opened their minds! He had to open their minds about Easter. They weren't ready with their minds for Easter. Didn't we say here on Easter Sunday and then on the Sunday after, that modern people tend to be open-minded about everything except religion? Didn't we demonstrate a kind of weird closed-mindedness about any data which does not fit into our Baconian, cause-effect, technology-rendered world? Strange, but there are a lot of non-religious people who are fond of caricaturing religious people as being closed-minded. No, the story says, a man returning from the dead, standing among them; well, they thought it was a ghost. Most of them, I suppose, didn't know what to think. So the risen Christ had to get in there and open their minds, had to sabotage their little universe. Had to blow their minds before they could get it. So don't think of Sunday as a time to come down here and get confirmed what you already knew. To bolt down your belief like the pews that you're sitting in. To get it all sealed in concrete. No, no, no, no, you have to get up on Sunday morning and get all dressed up and come over here to the Chapel, and get into the kind of stuff we get into on Sunday morning, in order to blow your mind. In order to open your mind. 'Cause what goes on here is not common knowledge. What goes on here is not what is affirmed by nine out of 10 average Americans. Somebody comes in here to the Chapel. They come out Sunday morning, they say to me on the way out the door, "Well, I have never heard anything "like that before in my life!" And I usually say, "Well, what did you make on the SAT?" (congregation laughing) And then they'll say, "Why, 1350!" And I said, "Well, that's only average around here. "You know, stick with it, it may come to you." (congregation laughing) Don't come out of here complaining you've never heard any of this stuff before! What do you

expect? Look at where you live. Look at the age in which we dwell. Church is a place to get your mind blown. Not an escape from reality, but a penetration further into reality. Reality you would've never known if Jesus had not come into your life and opened your mind. And then there's one last word. What's the last thing Jesus says to his people at the end of the story? He says, "You are "witnesses to these things." You're witnesses to these things. Maybe the real test of Sunday is not how you come in, but how you go out. We come here on Sunday, called by the risen Christ. He comes, He stands among us. He stupefies some, He startles others, offers peace to others. And then He gives us what we need: Tangible, visible reassurance. To others He gives a fitly spoken word of comfort. He opens our minds so that we might understand the Scriptures. And then He sends us forth into the world to be His witnesses. You're a witness. If you notice, in a court of law, when a witness is called forward, we aren't interested in the personal history of the witness or the personal characteristics, we just ask the witness, "What have you seen? "What have you heard? "Tell the court about it." You're a witness. So, tomorrow, say at work, or somewhere in the library or something, somebody'll ask you, "Well, how was church yesterday?" And you say, "Well, it's hard to say. "You kinda had to be there to believe it." But remember, you're a witness. A witness simply tells what's been seen and what's been heard. And maybe before the court of the world, the story's implying that you and I are the only witnesses Jesus has. So go ahead, be a witness. Try to tell and show what this has meant. Do you, a nice intelligent person like you, do you believe in the risen Christ? Do you believe that in this world of death, there can be the triumph of life? Believe it? (chuckles) I don't only believe it, I mean, I've witnessed it! I was there on Sunday. (joyous organ music) ♪ Christ is alive let Christians sing ♪ ♪ His cross stands empty ♪ ♪ To the sky ♪ ♪ Let streets and homes ♪ ♪ With praises ring ♪ ♪ His love healed ♪ ♪ And shall never die ♪ ♪ Christ is alive ♪ ♪ No longer bound ♪ ♪ To distant years ♪ ♪ In Palestine ♪ ♪ But comes to pray ♪ ♪ Both here and now ♪ ♪ And touching every ♪ ♪ Place and time ♪ ♪ Not throned afar ♪ ♪ Remotely high ♪ ♪ Untouched unmoved ♪ ♪ By human pains ♪ ♪ But daily in ♪ ♪ The midst of life ♪ ♪ Our Savior in ♪ ♪ The Godhead reigns ♪ ♪ In every insult ♪ ♪ Rift and war ♪ ♪ Where color scorn ♪ ♪ Or wealth divide ♪ ♪ He suffers still ♪ ♪ Yet loves the more ♪ ♪ And lives for heaven ♪ ♪ Rules divine ♪ ♪ Christ is alive ♪ ♪ And comes to bring ♪ ♪ Good news to this ♪ ♪ And every age ♪ ♪ Till earth and all ♪ ♪ Creation ring ♪ ♪ With joy with justice ♪ ♪ Love and praise ♪

Reader: The Lord be with you.

Congregation: And also with you.

- Let us pray. Oh eternal God, singing Christ Is Alive, we gather as your people, proclaiming You as our Lord, and a great God above all Gods. We acknowledge that You have drawn us to worship for reasons greater than we ourselves understand. Having heard the good news of Your resurrection, our eyes have been opened, not only to the reality of Your presence, but to the necessity of witnessing to that truth in the world around us. We confess to the times we have failed to be faithful to Your purposes. We may be quick to hail the power of Jesus' name, but we are slow to spread our trophies at His feet. He has opened our minds that we may understand the Scriptures, but we have hardened our hearts against His interpretation of them. He has enacted the role of the Lord's suffering servant, but our faith becomes skeptical when things don't go our way. We sing that there is a cross for everyone, but we wait for Jesus to carry not only His, but ours as well. Forgive us, oh God, for mocking the message of our Lord's resurrection when we feign belief but fail to live out our faith. Remembering the suffering Christ had to endure before He could rise again, we offer our

prayers this day for all those who suffer. For those who must endure trauma in body or mind. For all those who's livelihood is insecure, the overworked, the hungry, the homeless, those driven to despair. For little children who's surroundings hide them from Your love and Your beauty. For those who have to bear their burdens alone. And for all who have lost those whom they love. For those who are overextended, overwhelmed with responsibility, who doubt their own abilities, or are oversensitive or afraid. For those who are surrounded by warfare, civil unrest, or other forms of violence. Give us the peace and the power that flow from You alone, oh God. Rule our hearts, that we will make You known not only in the breaking of bread, but in the sharing of the bread. That we shall shoulder the cross You carried for the suffering, the poor, and the oppressed. That we shall recognize that repentance, like charity, must begin at home. Deliver us from the lure of cheap grace. Make us as willing to pay the cost of Your victories as we are to claim them for ourselves. This we pray, in the name of our resurrected Lord, Jesus Christ, amen. Let us present the offerings of our life and our labor to the Lord with thanksgiving. (peaceful organ music) (dramatic organ music) (harmonious choral and organ music) (peaceful organ music) (harmonious choral and organ music) (peaceful organ music) (harmonious choral and organ music) (peaceful organ music) (harmonious choral and organ music) (peaceful organ music) (joyous organ music) ♪ Praise God, from whom all blessings flow ♪ Praise Him, all creatures here below ♪ ♪ Hallelujah, hallelujah ♪ ♪ Praise God above, ye heavenly host ♪ ♪ Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ♪ ♪ Hallelujah, hallelujah ♪ ♪ Hallelujah, hallelujah ♪ ♪ Hallelujah ♪

- Oh Lord, our God, the author and giver of all good things, we thank You for all Your mercies, and for Your loving care, over all Your creatures. We bless You for the gift of life. For Your protection round about us. For Your guiding hand upon us. And for the tokens of Your love within us. We thank you for friendship and duty, for good hopes and precious memories. For the joys that cheer us, and the trials that teach us to trust in You. Most of all we thank You for the saving knowledge of Your Son, our savior. For the living presence of Your Spirit, the comforter for Your church, the body of Christ. For the ministry of Word and Sacrament, and for all the means of grace. In all these things, oh heavenly God, make us wise for a right use of Your benefits. That we may render an acceptable thanksgiving unto You all the days of our lives. These things we pray in the name of the one who taught us to pray with confidence.

Congregation: Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed by 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, the power, and the glory forever, amen. (peaceful organ music) ♪ Come ye faithful raise the strain ♪ ♪ Of triumphant gladness ♪ ♪ God hath brought forth Israel ♪ ♪ Into joy from sadness ♪ ♪ Loosed from Pharaoh's bitter yoke ♪ ♪ Jacob's sons and daughters ♪ ♪ Led them with unmoistened foot ♪ ♪ Through the Red Sea waters ♪ ♪ 'Tis the spring of souls today ♪ ♪ Christ hath burst his prison ♪ ♪ And from three days' sleep in death ♪ ♪ As a sun hath risen ♪ ♪ All the winter of our sins ♪ ♪ Long and dark, is flying ♪ ♪ From his light, to whom we give ♪ ♪ Laud and praise undying ♪ ♪ Now the queen of seasons, bright ♪ ♪ With the day of splendor ♪ ♪ With the royal feast of feasts ♪ ♪ Comes its joy to render ♪ ♪ Comes to glad Jerusalem ♪ ♪ Who with true affection ♪ ♪ Welcomes in unwearied strains ♪ ♪ Jesus' resurrection ♪ ♪ Neither might the gates of death ♪ ♪ Nor the tomb's dark portal ♪ ♪ Nor the watchers nor the seal ♪ ♪ Hold thee as a mortal ♪ ♪ But today amidst thine own ♪ ♪ Thou didst stand bestowing ♪ ♪ That thine peace is evermore ♪ ♪ Passeth human knowing ♪ ♪ Hallelujah now we cry ♪ ♪ To our King immortal ♪ ♪ Who, triumphant, burst the bars ♪ ♪ Of the



tomb's dark portal ♪ ♪ Hallelujah with the Son ♪ ♪ God the Father praising ♪ ♪ Hallelujah yet again ♪ ♪ To the Spirit raising ♪

- The grace of our Lord and Father, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you now and always. (harmonious choral music) (joyous organ music)

(congregation murmuring)