

# Praise Today

Contemporary Worship Forms in the Context of the Historical Service

Volume 5, Number 5

September/October 1999

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## Salem's 110th Anniversary

Rev. James R. Sonnemann

On 12 September, 1999, Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church on Milwaukee's lower east side celebrated its 110th. Anniversary service. The theme, to reflect Salem's changing neighborhood and changing ministry serving the still-sinful people with the unchanging truths of God's Word, was "Listen! The LORD is Calling to the City," from Micah's prophecy. **Rev. Jon Hartmann** from **Garden Homes Lutheran Church** preached the sermon. The sermon can be found on Salem's web site at:  
<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Academy/7981/lessons.html>

### LISTEN! THE LORD IS CALLING TO THE CITY!

WELCOME! How a congregation understands its past and its future under God becomes evident on an occasion like this 110th. anniversary celebration. Some celebrations reflect a longing for the past and a disdain or a sense of despair for the future. Some celebrations embrace the opportunities the future holds but discount the heritage of the past, which actually brought things to their status in the present. But what is the godly way? It seems that, to celebrate the past is to be thankful for God's countless blessings. To celebrate the future is to express confidence in God on the basis of the past experience of his faithfulness to his promises. Let us remember the past, not nostalgically, but as a pledge of God's presence and faithfulness in the unknown future. A poster in our dining room summarizes the proper reflection on past and future: "I don't know what the future holds, but I know who holds the future!"

Today's theme, LISTEN! THE LORD IS CALLING TO THE CITY! (Micah 6:9), invites us to consider how our community has become what it is today and what opportunities for soul saving Gospel ministry God thus presents to us.

Happy Anniversary!

### Invocation

**HYMN**—#570: "O Christians, Haste"

(Unless otherwise noted, all hymns are from *Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal* published by Northwestern

Publishing House)

### Approach to God- Confession of Sin and Absolution

**CONFESSION**—Psalm 51 (page 86 in *Christian Worship*)

**All:** Sing the refrains and the "Glory be..."

**Men:** Sing the first half of each verse.

**Women:** Sing the last half of each verse.

**ABSOLUTION**—**Choir:** "Song of Zechariah"

### LISTEN! THE LORD IS CALLING TO THE CITY!

**THEME TEXT**—Micah 6:9

The prophet Micah addressed the rebellious people of Judah with God's call to repentance and warnings of judgment. He also announced God's promises of forgiveness and the return from exile. Micah challenged the religious and civil leadership of Judah to lead the people in a return to God when he called on Jerusalem: "LISTEN! THE LORD IS CALLING TO THE CITY!" Since we are surrounded by a fallen culture, God's challenge is issued to us, as well, to witness to our community with calls to repentance and with the Gospel promises in Jesus. LISTEN! THE LORD IS CALLING TO THE CITY!

**PART ONE:**

**LISTEN! THE LORD IS CALLING TO THE CITY!**

*This city needs the Gospel*

“The godly have been swept from the land; not one upright man remains. All men lie in wait to shed blood; each hunts his brother with a net. Both hands are skilled in doing evil; the ruler demands gifts, the judge accepts bribes, the powerful dictate what they desire—they all conspire together.”—*Micah 7:2-3*

The sin and despair that surrounds us is our opportunity to call people to repentance and to proclaim the Gospel message of forgiveness and life in Jesus.

**CHOIR**—“Not Unto Us” (Salem’s Alumni Choir)

**OLD TESTAMENT**—Ezekiel 33:7-11

God calls us to be his watchmen, to warn the wayward, and to comfort the hopeless.

*The Old Testament reading was read by Ken Weber, co-chairman of the Anniversary Committee and chairman of the Progress and Planning Committee.*

**HYMN**—“The Old Rugged Cross” (insert)

**CHILDREN’S MESSAGE**—2 Corinthians 3:3

“Living Christ’s Message”

**HYMN**—#345: “In the Cross of Christ I Glory”



**PART TWO:**

**LISTEN! THE LORD IS CALLING TO THE CITY!**

*God has given us a mission in this city*

“Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy. You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea. You will be true to Jacob, and show mercy to Abraham, as you pledged on oath to our fathers in days long ago.”—*Micah 7:18-20*

Our mission is to present the Gospel, which heals what has been wounded by the accusations of God’s law.

**SOLO**—“How Great Thou Art” by Joyce Washburn

**NEW TESTAMENT**—John 3:16-17

This passage is the well-known summary of the Gospel message that, through the sacrifice of Jesus, we have forgiveness and eternal life.

*The New Testament reading was read by Ron Biffel, president of Salem’s church council.*

**HYMN**—#379: “Amazing Grace”

Natasha Seaberry, saxophone accompaniment

*Praise Today* is an independent publication serving pastors and worship leaders of confessional Lutheranism. It is published bi-monthly and relies heavily on the submissions of subscribers to share their ideas of worship framed in the historical orders of service with application to the needs of Christians today.

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Back issues are available by writing to the editor at the address above.

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SERMON—Joel 2:38-42

“Celebrate the Promiscuity of God”

by Rev. Jon Hartmann, Garden Homes

CONFESSION OF FAITH—The Apostles’ Creed, CW page 19.

THE OFFERING—

PRAYERS—Prayer of the Church

“The Lord’s Prayer” (solo by Barry Washburn)

HYMN—#556: “Rise, Shine, You People”

**PART THREE:  
LISTEN! THE LORD IS CALLING TO THE  
CITY!**

*God has great plans for our city*

“But as for me, I watch in hope for the LORD, I wait for God my Savior; my God will hear me. Do not gloat over me, my enemy! Though I have fallen, I will rise. Though I sit in darkness, the LORD will be my light. Because I have sinned against him, I will bear the LORD’s wrath, until he pleads my case and establishes my right. He will bring me out into the light; I will see his righteousness. Then my enemy will see it and will be covered with shame, she who said to me, “Where is the LORD your God?” My eyes will see her downfall; even now she will be trampled underfoot like mire in the streets. The day for building your walls will come, the day for extending your boundaries. In that day people will come to you from Assyria and the cities of Egypt, even from Egypt to the Euphrates and from sea to sea and from mountain to mountain.”—*Micah 7:7-12*

Jerusalem would fall under God’s discipline, but he holds out to his people the promise that their beloved city, the city God called his home, would be restored. The worship of God would become a magnet attracting former enemies to Jerusalem.

God has great plans for our city. As souls are won for Jesus, the peace of Christ that envelops it will make our city a living portrait of the heavenly Jerusalem (Revelation 21) where the saints dwell in Christ’s glory. How God loves the city, for he loves the souls that are in it!

CHOIR—“Our Song of Praise”

EPISTLE/HISTORICAL LESSON—Revelation 21

*The Epistle/Historical lesson was read by John Hoh, co-chairman of the Anniversary Committee and chairman of the Evangelism Committee.*

HYMN—#341: “Crown Him With Many Crowns”

PRAYER—For the mission in the city

C— Amen, Amen, Amen

BENEDICTION—“Blessing” (solo by Rev. Sonnemann)

HYMN—“Blest Be the Tie That Binds” (insert)



Photos in this article taken by John L. Hoh, Jr.  
The top photo on this page was used with the article about Salem’s ministries in *The Northwestern Lutheran*, January 1999.



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# O Savior, Rend the Heavens Wide

*Fredrich von Spee, 1623  
Translated by Martin L. Seltz, 1965–Original Text  
submitted by Richard Futrell*

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*“How long?” the Old Testament Christians asked before they would be graced physically, in human form, by the promised Savior. We, too, ask, “how long?” in Advent as we focus on Christ’s first–and second–coming. This is a hymn I really love for it’s strong adventist theme, powerful melody, with its culmination in Heaven!*

*First shown is the translator’s (Matrin Seltz) original text. I could not do better myself if I lived 100 years! But I did think a couple of places needed theological tweaking, and, thus, I made the appropriate revisions. I will not display LW’s text, for 90% of LW’s revisions made the hymn poetically weaker!*

*If you can think of any suggestions to improve the hymn, please e-mail it my way (richsheri@mciworld.com).*

*Best Wishes, Rich*

## Original Text

1. O Savior, rend the heavens wide;  
Come down, come down with mighty stride.  
Unbar the gates, the doors break down;  
Unbar the way to heaven’s crown.
2. O Father, dew from heaven send;  
As gentle dew, O Son, descend.  
Drop down, you clouds, and torrents bring;  
To Jacob’s line rain down the King.
3. O earth, in flow’ring bud be seen;  
Clothe hill and dale in garb of green.  
O earth, bring forth this Blossom rare;  
O Savior, rise from meadow fair.
4. O Fount of hope, how long, how long?  
When wilt thou come with comfort strong?  
O come, O come, high heav’n forego;  
Console us in our vale of woe.
5. O Morning Star, O radiant Sun,  
When will our hearts behold thy dawn?  
O Sun, arise; without thy light  
We grope in gloom and dark of night.
6. Here dreadful doom upon us lies;  
Death looms so grim before our eyes.  
O come, lead us with mighty hand  
From exile to our fatherland.
7. There will we all our praises bring  
Ever to thee, our Savior King;  
There will we laud thee and adore  
Forever and forevermore.

## Revised Text

1. O Savior, rend the heavens wide;  
Come down, come down with mighty stride.  
Unbar the gates, the doors break down;  
Unbar the way to heaven’s crown.
2. O Father, Light from heaven send;  
As morning dew, O Son, descend,  
As pouring clouds in torrents bring,  
To fallen man rain down the King.
3. O Source of hope, how long, how long?  
When will You come with comfort strong?  
O come, O come, Your throne forego;  
Console us in our vale of woe.
4. O Morning Star, O radiant Sun,  
When will our hearts behold Your dawn?  
O Sun, arise; without Your light  
We grope in gloom and dark of night.
5. Sin’s dreadful doom upon us lies;  
Death looms so grim before our eyes.  
O come, lead us with mighty hand  
From exile to our promised land.
6. There shall we all our praises bring  
Ever to You, our Savior King;  
There shall we laud You and adore  
Forever and forevermore.

## Reviser's Notes:

On this text I began with Seltz' original text as it is much superior to LW's emasculation. I did, however, revise the text to rid it of archaisms and make it more Christ centred.

Verse 2:

Line 2: Here I did use part of a revision from LW, but did not use LW's "lend" but the original "send," which is stronger.

Line 3: Changed the clouds actually doing the raining to using the cloud-like imagery of raining Christ on us.

Line 4: Changes to somewhat abstract "Jacob's line" to clearer "fallen man."

Verse 3:

Line 1: Changes the little-used "Fount" to "Source."

Line 3: Changed "High heav'n" to "Your throne" since Christ can be in two places at once as He is God. In other words, Christ on earth is still God in heaven. Yet by using "throne," this stressed more Christ humiliation.

Verse 5:

Line 1: Changed "Here" with "Sin's" as "here" can be misintrepreted as the Church since that is where this hymn will be mostly sung.

Line 4: Changed the Nazi-sounding "fatherland" to the standard revision of "promised land."



*We don't know  
What the future holds...  
But we know  
Who holds the future!*

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## O Savior, Precious Savior–The Original Text

*by Francis R. Havergal  
submitted by Richard Futrell*

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*To be honest, this is not one of my faves, but I do consider it part of our core hymnod and, thus, the revision. I don;t loathe it like "Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus," but neither do I like it like "A Lamb Undaunted Now Goes Forth."*

*If I ruined this one because it is one of your faves, let me know. If it's an improvement, likewise. Also, any suggestions are always welcome.*

1. O Savior, precious Savior,  
Whom, yet unseen, we love;  
O Name of might and favor,  
All other names above.  
We worship Thee, we bless Thee,  
To Thee alone we sing;  
We praise Thee and confess Thee,  
Our holy Lord and King.
2. O Bringer of salvation,  
Who wondrously hast wrought,  
Thyself the revelation  
Of love beyond our thought,  
We worship Thee, we bless Thee,  
To Thee alone we sing;  
We praise Thee and confess Thee,  
Our gracious Lord and King.
3. In Thee all fulness dwelleth,  
All grace and power divine;  
The glory that excelleth,  
O Son of God, is Thine.  
We worship Thee, we bless Thee,  
To Thee alone we sing;  
We praise Thee and confess Thee,  
Our glorious Lord and King.
4. Oh, grant the consummation  
Of this our song above  
In endless adoration  
And everlasting love!  
Then we shall praise and bless Thee  
Where perfect praises ring,  
And evermore confess Thee  
Our Savior and our King.

## O Savior, Precious Savior--Altered Version

by Francis R. Havergal

1. O Savior, precious Savior,  
Whom, yet unseen, we love;  
O Name of might and favor,  
All other names above.  
We worship You, we bless You,  
To You, O Christ, we sing;  
We praise You and confess You,  
Our holy Lord and King.
2. O Bringer of salvation,  
So marvelously wrought,  
Yourself the revelation  
Of love beyond our thought,  
We worship You, we bless You,  
To You, O Christ, we sing;  
We praise You and confess You,

Our gracious Lord and King.

3. In You all fullness dwelling,  
All grace and pow'r outpours:  
The glory all-excelling,  
O Son of God, is Yours.  
We worship You, we bless You,  
To You, O Christ, we sing;  
We praise You and confess You,  
Our glorious Lord and King.
4. Oh, grant the consummation  
Of this our song above  
In endless adoration  
And everlasting love!  
Then we shall praise and bless You  
Where perfect praises ring,  
And evermore confess You,  
Our Savior and our King.

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## Christ, You are the One Thing Needful

by Richard K. Futrell

*Recommend melody, Erin, by Paul Langston, copyright 1975, Broadman Press*

1. Christ, You are the one thing needful,  
Source of faith and source of life,  
May we to Your Word be heedful  
In this tempest, in this strife.

**REFRAIN**—Keep us pure in truth and doctrine  
To reflect Your Gospel light!

2. We are all by nature fallen,  
Sinning by our thought and deed,  
Yet, You speak Your word of pardon:  
I forgive you; you are freed!

**REFRAIN**—Keep us pure in truth and doctrine  
To reflect Your Gospel light!

3. You have washed us in the waters,  
Cleansed, forgiven, born above,  
Now we are Your sons, Your daughters,  
Whom You cherish, whom You love.

**REFRAIN**—Keep us pure in truth and doctrine  
To reflect Your Gospel light!

4. When besieged by the Accuser,  
Weakened by the slings of hell,  
You restore us by Your Supper;  
Your true presence guards us well.

**REFRAIN**—Keep us pure in truth and doctrine  
To reflect Your Gospel light!

5. In this place, we hear Your Gospel  
And we taste Your Sacrament,  
Granting faith by means so simple:  
Water, Word, Your Testament.

**REFRAIN**—Keep us pure in truth and doctrine  
To reflect Your Gospel light!

6. God, the wellspring of all wisdom,  
Frame our mind and frame our heart;  
Grant us faith to know Your kingdom  
To entwine our every part.

**REFRAIN**—Keep us pure in truth and doctrine  
To reflect Your Gospel light!

7. God: the Father, Son, and Spirit,  
Triune God, whom we adore,  
Take us to the heavenly banquet,  
In Your presence evermore!

**REFRAIN**—Keep us pure in truth and doctrine  
To reflect Your Gospel light!

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# God, Here I Confess My Sin

by Richard Futrell

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*Recommend melody: Cordell by Christopher Uehlein, copyright 1990, Blue Cloud Abbey*

1. God, here I confess my sin,  
Of my failure now within;  
I cannot meet Your demands  
And have blood upon on my hands!
2. If You, God, were truly fair,  
I would die in dark despair,  
I would earn sin's wage of death,  
Cursed by my guilt-laden breath.
3. From deep depths I cry to You,  
"Be a God of mercy true,  
Be a God of living grace,  
Shine upon this fallen face."
4. "I, your God, am great in grace,  
For My Son died in your place;  
You are covered by His blood,  
Through baptism's cleansing flood."
5. "Have you not heard My decree,  
'You are pardoned, saved, set free,'  
Spoke in words so loud and clear;  
O my child, you need not fear!"
6. "Now recall My words so true,  
'Taste my Body, here for you,  
Drink My Blood, My Testament,  
In My holy Sacrament.'"
7. You are not a God forlorn,  
Trapped in heaven, while we mourn,  
You still come to us in love,  
From Your mansions, high above.
8. In Your simple means of grace,  
Heav'n and earth meet in this place,  
Miracles of God divine:  
Water, Word, and Bread and Wine.
9. Thus, we praise You, God of might;  
You have freed us from our night,  
Father, Son, and Spirit: Lord—  
One, true God to be adored!



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## A Mighty Fortress

Revision by Richard Futrell

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*Below is what I think will be my final (I hope) version of my "A Mighty Fortress" translation.*

*By Martin Luther; 1999 Translation by Richard K. Futrell*

1. A mighty Fortress is our God,  
A shield, which never fails us;  
He breaks the tyrant's wounding rod  
When wickedness assails us.  
Yet Satan still intends To work his evil ends,  
To use his sly deceit To drive us to defeat:  
No earthly force can quell him!
2. We win no battles by our might,  
Our strife alone is losing;  
But our Defender takes the fight,  
The Man of God's own choosing.  
You ask, "Who can this be?" The one, true God is He,  
Christ Jesus, mighty Lord: The Father's Son adored—  
He triumphs in the battle!
3. Though demon hordes may swarm the land  
All lusting to devour us,  
We are not fearful, firm we stand:  
They cannot overpower us.  
This world's dark prince can rage, In grim attack engage;  
His harm can never last, Judgment on him is passed:  
God's slightest word can crush him!
4. Despite all foes, the Word shall stand,  
Nor is it by their merit.  
The Lord is with us, close at hand,  
With His good gifts and Spirit. Our foes may in this strife  
Take family, goods, and life, Yet what does Satan gain?  
God's Kingdom shall remain—  
And shall be ours forever!

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## Appropriate Hymns for Lutheran Sunday School

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*by Richard Futrell*

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### **Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word**

By Martin Luther, Translated by Richard Futrell  
Tune: Erhalt Uns, Herr

1. Lord, keep us steadfast in Your Word,  
Curb those who, by false tongue or sword,  
Seek to depose Your only Son,  
Christ Jesus, from His glorious throne.
2. Show forth Your power, mighty Lord,  
Christ Jesus, King of kings, adored;  
Safeguard Your striving Church that we  
May sing Your praise eternally!
3. O Spirit, Comforter so dear,  
Grant to the Church one doctrine here,  
Embrace us in our final breath  
And bring us into life from death.

### **Day of My Baptism**

By A.C. Mueller, altered  
Tune: Federal Street

1. I am baptized—O bless-ed day  
When Jesus washed my sins away,  
When heavens' grace upon me smiled  
And I became God's holy child.
2. O let me daily help receive  
Your word of pardon to believe.  
When I am tempted, make me strong  
To choose the right and leave the wrong.

3. So will I keep the promise giv'n  
When I was made an heir of heav'n,  
My Savior joyfully confess,  
And serve the Lord in holiness.

### **I Am Jesus' Letter**

by Henry L. Letterman  
Tune: Wem In Leidenstagen

1. I am Jesus' letter,  
Sent to all my friends,  
Showing them with actions  
What the Lord intends.
2. Telling them that Jesus  
Died the world to win,  
Telling then to love Him  
Who forgives their sin.
3. Let me be a message  
Drawn in letters plain,  
Let me tell the story  
Of the Savior slain.
4. Let me say to each one,  
Come to Jesus' side,  
Hold to Him forever,  
In His Love abide.