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The Common Service Adapted According to RSV Principles

As part of the "culture-hour" program at Concordia Theological Seminary, St. Louis, a group of students met once a week during the first semester of the current academic year, under the guidance of a member of the faculty, to investigate the theological bearing of current problems in worship. Since the Revised Standard Version professes to have been designed for *public* as well as private worship, one of the committees of this group undertook an objective study of the problems that would be involved if the Revised Standard Version were to be used in connection with the rite of the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America as *The Lutheran Liturgy* and *The Lutheran Hymnal* set it forth. The committee tried to face up without prejudice or bias to the diverse opinions that exist on the subject both in our own Church and in other Lutheran bodies. Some have held that the only change required would be the substitution of the new version for the Authorized Version in the pericopes. Others would conform the introits, graduals, tracts, alleluia verses and versicles to the new version. Still others feel that the invariable framework of the service would also demand revision, one party describing the necessary changes as extensive, another party tending to minimize the extent of the required adaptation. The committee operated on the principle that changes in the Service should be made where necessary, but that such changes should be held to the minimum. They presented their findings—without any propagandistic intent, let it be emphasized—in a concrete way through the appended order of service, which was used experimentally in the Seminary's morning chapel service on the Monday after Laetare, March 16. We share it in full, including the committee's introduction, with our readers—also without any propagandistic intent—as a matter of current interest.—THE EDITORS.

Herewith a committee of last semester's culture-hour group, "Twentieth Century Worship," seeks to demonstrate in an actual worship experience the problems that the introduction of the Revised Standard Version in the worship of the Church would bring with it. It involves more than substituting a different text for the Epistle and the Holy Gospel. The Lutheran rite is thoroughly Biblical. A modification of the vernacular Biblical basis requires a thoroughgoing revision of the *whole* service, ordinary and propers, collects and creed as well as lessons and psalmody. This service represents an attempt at such a revision.

The ordinary is the Order for Holy Communion of *The Lutheran Liturgy*. Since the service is non-Eucharistic, the Confession of Sins from the Morning Service replaces the Confession and Absolution prefixed to the Eucharistic order. For the same reason the service con-

cludes after the Our Father with the Prayer for the Church and the Blessing, as in the Morning Service.

The propers are those for Laetare (Mid-Lent Sunday). *Gloria in excelsis* is omitted because of the season.

THE COMMITTEE

Erwin A. Moldenhauer	Walter Wehmeier	Victor Halboth
Thomas Reuther	Alfred Graser	Martin R. Taddey
Charles T. Knippel	Arnold Rakow	Harry Theiss
Dean Sringer	George Mock	Gordon Johnston
Arthur Gronbach	Jerrold Swanson	Arthur Carl Piepkorn
Dave Ebert	Jerome Newton	(adviser)

THE SERVICE

The Congregation rises.

THE INVOCATION

℣: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

℟: Amen.

THE CONFESSION OF SINS

Officiant: Beloved in the Lord, let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins to God, our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

℣: Our help is in the name of the Lord.

℟: Who made heaven and earth.

℣: I said, I will confess my transgression to the Lord.

℟: Then Thou didst forgive the guilt of my sin.

Officiant: Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer, we poor sinners confess to Thee, that we are by nature sinful and unclean and that we have sinned against Thee by thought, word, and deed. Therefore we flee for refuge to Thine endless mercy, seeking and imploring Thy grace, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.

All: O most merciful God, who hast given Thine only Son to die for us, have mercy upon us, and for His sake grant us forgiveness of all our sins: and by Thy Holy Spirit increase in us true knowledge of Thee, and of Thy will, and true obedience to Thy Word, so that by Thy grace we may come to eternal life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Officiants: Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy upon us, and has given His only Son to die for us, and for His sake forgives

us all our sins. To those who believe in His name He gives power to become the children of God and has promised them His Holy Spirit. He who believes and is baptized will be saved. Grant this, O Lord, to all of us.

R: Amen.

THE INTROIT

All: Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad for her: all you who love her.

Rejoice with her in joy: all you who mourn over her.

(Psalm) I was glad when they said to me: Let us go to the house of the Lord.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit:

As it was in the beginning, is now, and forever will be, to all eternity. Amen.

Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad for her: all you who love her.

Rejoice with her in joy: all you who mourn over her.

KYRIE

All: Lord, have mercy on us. Christ, have mercy on us. Lord, have mercy on us.

THE COLLECT

℣: The Lord be with you.

℟: And with your spirit.

Officiant: Let us pray. Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, that we, who deserve to be punished for our evil deeds, may be mercifully relieved by the comfort of Thy grace; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with Thee and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, to all eternity.

R: Amen.

The Congregation is seated.

THE EPISTLE

The Lesson for Laetare is written in the fourth chapter of Galatians, beginning at the twenty-first verse.

Tell me, you who desire to be under law, do you not hear the Law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave and one by a free woman. But the son of the slave was born according to the flesh, the son of the free woman through promise. Now this is an allegory: these women are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery; she is Hagar. Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia; she corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is

in slavery with her children. But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother. For it is written,

"Rejoice, O barren one that dost not bear;
break forth and shout, thou who art not in travail;
for the desolate hath more children
than she who hath a husband."

Now we, brethren, like Isaac, are children of promise. But as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so it is now. But what does the Scripture say? "Cast out the slave and her son; for the son of the slave shall not inherit with the son of the free woman." So, brethren, we are not children of the slave but of the free woman. The Lesson ends here.

THE GRADUAL

I was glad when they said to me: Let us go to the house of the Lord.

℣: Peace be within your walls: and security within your towers.

THE TRACT

Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion: which cannot be removed, but abides forever.

℣: As the mountains are round about Jerusalem: so the Lord is round about His people from this time forth and forevermore.

The Congregation rises.

THE HOLY GOSPEL

℣: The Holy Gospel is written in the sixth chapter of St. John, beginning at the first verse.

℟: Glory be to Thee, O Lord!

After this Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias. And a multitude followed Him, because they saw the signs which He did on those who were diseased. Jesus went up into the hills, and there sat down with His disciples. Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. Lifting up His eyes, then, and seeing that a multitude was coming to Him, Jesus said to Philip, "How are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?" This He said to test him, for He Himself knew what He would do. Philip answered Him, "Two hundred denarii would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little." One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to Him, "There is a lad here who has five barley

loaves and two fish; but what are they among so many?" Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place; so the men sat down, in number about five thousand. Jesus then took the loaves, and when He had given thanks, He distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish as much as they wanted. And when they had eaten their fill, He told His disciples, "Gather up the fragments left over, that nothing may be lost." So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten. When the people saw the sign which He had done, they said, "This is indeed the Prophet who is to come into the world!" Perceiving then that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king, Jesus withdrew again to the hills by Himself. The Gospel ends here.

R: Praise be to Thee, O Christ!

THE CREED

Officiant: I believe in one God,

All: The Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, begotten of His Father before all ages, God from God, Light from Light, True God from True God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; through Whom all things were made; Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven and is sitting at the right hand of the Father; and He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead; Whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Life-giver, Who proceeds from the Father and the Son, Who is worshiped and glorified together with the Father and the Son, Who spoke through the Prophets. And I believe one holy Christian and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins; and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the age to come. Amen.

THE OFFERTORY

All: Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and steadfast spirit within me.

Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.

Restore to me the joy of Thy salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit. Amen.

The Congregation is seated while the offerings are gathered, and rises as they are brought forward.

THE GENERAL PRAYER

(Let us pray.) Almighty and most merciful God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we give Thee thanks for all Thy goodness and steadfast love, especially for the gift of Thy beloved Son and for the revelation of Thy will and grace; and we beseech Thee to implant Thy Word in us, that in good and honest hearts we may keep it and bring forth fruit by patience in well-doing.

Most heartily we beseech Thee to rule and govern Thy universal Church, with all its pastors and ministers, that we may be kept in the pure doctrine of Thy saving Word, by which faith in Thee may be strengthened, love increased in us toward all mankind, and Thy kingdom extended. Send out laborers into Thy harvest and sustain those whom Thou hast sent, that the message of reconciliation may be proclaimed to all people and the Gospel preached in all the world.

Grant also health and prosperity to all who are in high positions, especially to the President and Congress of the United States, the Governor and Legislature of this State, and to all our judges and officials, and endow them with grace to rule according to Thy good pleasure, for maintaining righteousness and for hindering and punishing wickedness, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, godly and respectful in every way.

May it please Thee also to turn the hearts of our enemies and adversaries, that they may cease their enmity and be inclined to walk with us in meekness and in peace.

All who are in distress, want, illness, anguish of labor, peril of death, or any other adversity, especially those who are suffering for Thy name's and for Thy truth's sake, comfort, O God, with Thy Holy Spirit, that they may receive and acknowledge their afflictions as the manifestation of Thy fatherly will.

And although we have deserved Thy righteous wrath and many punishments, yet we entreat Thee, O most merciful Father, not to remember the sins of our youth nor our many transgressions, but out of Thine inexpressible goodness, grace, and steadfast love to protect us from all harm and danger of body and soul. Keep us from false and harmful doctrine, from war and bloodshed, from plague and pestilence, from all calamity by fire and water, from hail and tempest,

from failure of harvest and from famine, from anguish of heart and despair of Thy steadfast love, and from an evil death. And in every time of trouble show Thyself a very present Help, the Savior of all men, and especially of those who believe.

Cause all needful fruits of the earth to prosper, that we may enjoy them in due season. Give success to the Christian training of the young, to all lawful occupations on land and sea (and in the air), and to all pure arts and useful knowledge, and crown them with Thy blessing.

Receive, O God, our bodies and souls, and all our talents, together with the offerings we bring before Thee, for Thou hast bought us to be Thine own, that we may live unto Thee.

Here special supplications, intercessions, and prayers may be made.

Grant us these and whatever other things Thou wouldst have us ask of Thee, O God, for the sake of the bitter sufferings and death of Jesus Christ, Thine only Son, our Lord and Savior, who lives and reigns with Thee and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, to all eternity. Amen.

THE PREFACE AND SANCTUS

℣: The Lord be with you.

℟: And with your spirit.

℣: Lift up your hearts.

℟: We lift them up to the Lord.

℣: Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.

℟: It is fitting and right to do so.

Officiant: It is indeed fitting, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to Thee, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty, eternal God, who gavest salvation to mankind on the tree of the cross, that from where death arose, from there life also might rise again; and that he who by a tree once conquered might likewise by a tree be conquered, through Christ, our Lord; through whom with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we bless and magnify Thy glorious name, continually praising Thee and saying:

All: Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts, heaven and earth are full of Thy glory. Hosanna in the highest!

Blessed be He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!

OUR FATHER

Officiant: (Let us pray.) 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 sins, as we also have forgiven everyone who is indebted to us; * and lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

Congregation: For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

THE PRAYER FOR THE CHURCH

Officiant: (Let us pray.) Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, to Thy Church Thy Holy Spirit and the wisdom which comes down from above, that Thy Word, as befits it, may not be bound, but may speed on and be preached to the joy and upbuilding of Christ's holy people, that in steadfast faith we may serve Thee and in the confession of Thy name abide to the end; through (the same) Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with Thee and the (same) Holy Spirit, ever one God, to all eternity.

R: Amen.

THE BLESSING

Y: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you.

The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.

R: Amen.

APPENDIX

The following forms, not used on this occasion, are here added as a matter of information.

THE CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

All: O Almighty God, merciful Father, I, a poor miserable sinner, confess to Thee all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended Thee and justly deserved Thy temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray Thee of Thy boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Thy beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor sinful being.

Officiant: Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of

* Matt 6:12; Luke 11:4.

God to all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

R: Amen.

GLORIA IN EXCELSIS

Officiant: Glory to God in the highest.

All: And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee, we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory, O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty. O Lord, the only Son, Jesus Christ, O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, who takest away the sin of the world, have mercy on us. Thou who takest away the sin of the world, receive our prayer. Thou who sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy on us. For Thou alone art holy; Thou alone art the Lord. Thou alone, O Christ, with the Holy Spirit, art Most High in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

THE APOSTLES' CREED

Officiant: I believe in God,

All: The Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

And 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 sitting at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from where He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit; the Holy Christian Church, the fellowship of the saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and eternal life. Amen.

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to His disciples, saying: "Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup, after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you, this cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins; do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of Me."

PAX DOMINI.

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

℟: Amen.

AGNUS DEI

O [Christ, Thou] Lamb of God, who takest away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.

O [Christ, Thou] Lamb of God, who takest away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.

O [Christ, Thou] Lamb of God, who takest away the sin of the world, grant us Thy peace. Amen.

THE WORDS OF DISTRIBUTION

Take, eat; this is the true body of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, given into death for your sins. May this strengthen and preserve you in the true faith to eternal life.

Take, drink; this is the true blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, poured out for the forgiveness of your sins. May this strengthen and preserve you in the true faith to eternal life.

Go in peace.

NUNC DIMITTIS

Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy Word.

For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation which Thou hast prepared in the presence of all peoples.

A light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to Thy people Israel.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit:

As it was in the beginning, is now, and forever will be to all eternity. Amen.

THE THANKSGIVING

℣: O give thanks to the Lord for He is good:

℟: For His steadfast love endures forever.

or

℣: As often as you eat this bread and drink this cup:

℟: You proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

(Let us pray.) We give thanks to Thee, Almighty God, that Thou hast refreshed us through this salutary gift; and we beseech Thee of Thy

mercy to strengthen us thereby in faith toward Thee and in unflinching love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with Thee and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, to all eternity.

R: Amen.

or

(Let us pray.) O God the Father, Fount and Source of all goodness, who in steadfast love didst send Thine only Son into the flesh, we thank Thee that for His sake Thou hast given us pardon and peace in this Sacrament; and we beseech Thee not to forsake Thy children, but continually to rule our hearts and minds by Thy Holy Spirit, that we may be enabled constantly to serve Thee, through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with Thee and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, to all eternity.

R: Amen.

BENEDICAMUS

V: Let us bless the Lord.

R: Thanks be to God.

THE COLLECT FOR THE WORD

(Let us pray.) Blessed Lord, who hast caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning, grant that we may so hear them, read, take note, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by steadfastness and the encouragement of Thy holy Word we may embrace, and ever hold fast, the blessed hope of eternal life, which Thou hast given us in our Savior Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with Thee and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, to all eternity.

R: Amen.

THE GENERAL PRAYER (Morning Service)

(Let us pray.) Almighty and eternal God, who art worthy to be feared by all the children of men, we give Thee most humble and hearty thanks for the innumerable temporal and spiritual blessings, which Thou hast granted to us without any merit or worthiness on our part.

We praise Thee especially that Thou hast kept for us in their purity Thy saving Word and the sacred ordinances of Thy Church. And we beseech Thee, O Lord, to keep and extend Thy Kingdom of Grace and to grant to Thy holy Church throughout the world purity of doctrine and faithful pastors, who will preach Thy Word with power; and help all who hear rightly to understand and truly to believe it. Send out laborers into Thy harvest, and open the door of faith to all

the nations and to the people of Israel. Remember in mercy the enemies of Thy Church, and grant them repentance to life. Be Thou the Protector and Defender of Thy people in all time of affliction and danger; and may we, in fellowship with Thy Church and in brotherly unity with all our fellow Christians, fight the good fight of faith and in the end receive the salvation of our souls.

Grant Thy grace to all the nations of the earth. Above all, we entreat Thee to bless our land and all its inhabitants and all who are in high positions. Cause Thy glory to dwell among us, and let mercy and truth, righteousness and peace, prevail everywhere. To this end we commend to Thy care all our schools and pray Thee to make them nurseries of useful knowledge and Christian virtues, that they may bring forth the wholesome fruits of life.

Graciously defend us from all calamities by fire and water, from war and pestilence, from scarcity and famine. Protect and prosper everyone in his respective calling, and cause all useful arts to flourish among us. Be Thou the God and Father of the widow and the fatherless children, the Helper of the sick and the needy, and the Comforter of the forsaken and distressed.

Accept, we beseech Thee, our bodies and souls, our hearts and minds, our talents and power, together with the offerings we bring before Thee, which is our spiritual worship.

(Here special supplications, intercessions, and prayers may be made)

As we are strangers and exiles on earth, help us by true faith and a godly life to prepare for the age to come; doing the work that Thou hast given us to do while it is day, before the night comes when no one can work. And when our last hour comes, support us by Thy power and receive us into Thine eternal kingdom; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with Thee and the Holy Spirit to all eternity. Amen.