

AS WE GATHER

In various communities throughout the world, New Year's Eve is referred to as "Watch Night." It is not uncommon to find followers of Jesus gather in homes and in churches on this night to "keep watch" and pray as one year ends and another year arrives. Some say that these traditions date back to December 31, 1862, when enslaved Christians trimmed their lamps and, with great anticipation, waited for the clock to strike midnight. At the stroke of midnight, the Emancipation Proclamation of President Abraham Lincoln went into effect, and many slaves would celebrate their newfound freedom. As we gather with fellow believers tonight, we reflect on the year that is nearly over and the one that is soon to begin. Just as our gracious Savior was faithful in the past, He will remain with us in the coming year. Let us also keep watch and, with great anticipation, be ready for His appearing and the salvation He comes to bring.

+ SERVICE OF LIGHT +

LSB 379 O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL sts. 1, ref, 2

1 O come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold Him Born the king of angels: **Refrain**

**ref O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!**

2 Highest, most holy, Light of Light eternal,
Born of a virgin, a mortal He comes;
Son of the Father Now in flesh appearing! **Refrain**

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P Jesus Christ is the Light of the world,

C the light no darkness can overcome.

P Stay with us, Lord, for it is evening,

C **and the day is almost over.**

P Let Your light scatter the darkness

C **and illumine Your Church.**

COLLECT

Thanksgiving for Light

P Blessed are You, O Lord our God, king of the universe, who led Your people Israel by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. Enlighten our darkness by the light of Your Christ;

C **may His Word be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path;**

P for You are merciful, and You love Your whole creation and we, Your creatures, glorify You, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

SALUTATION

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

Eternal God, we commit to Your mercy and forgiveness the year now ending.

- C** We commend to Your blessing and love the times yet to come.
- P** In the new year, abide among us with Your Holy Spirit
- C** that we may always trust in the saving name of our Lord Jesus Christ,
- P** who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** Amen.

PSALM

Psalm 90:1–12

- P** Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations.
- C** Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting You are God.
- P** You return man to dust and say, “Return, O children of man!”
- C** For a thousand years in Your sight are but as yesterday when it is past, or as a watch in the night.
- P** You sweep them away as with a flood; they are like a dream, like grass that is renewed in the morning:
- C** in the morning it flourishes and is renewed; in the evening it fades and withers.

- P** For we are brought to an end by Your anger; by Your wrath we are dismayed.
- C** **You have set our iniquities before You, our secret sins in the light of Your presence.**
- P** For all our days pass away under Your wrath; we bring our years to an end like a sigh.
- C** **The years of our life are seventy, or even by reason of strength eighty; yet their span is but toil and trouble; they are soon gone, and we fly away.**
- P** Who considers the power of Your anger, and Your wrath according to the fear of You?
- C** **So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom.**

READING

Romans 8:31b–39 NIV

^{31b} If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? ³³ Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ³⁶ As it is written:

“For your sake we face death all day long;
we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.”

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

L O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

LSB 979 GOD, WHOSE ALMIGHTY WORD

1 God, whose almighty word Chaos and darkness heard

And took their flight:

Hear us, we humbly pray, And where the Gospel day

Sheds not its glorious ray,

Let there be light!

2 Lord, who once came to bring, On Your redeeming wing,

Healing and sight,

Health to the sick in mind, Sight to the inly blind:

Oh, now to humankind

Let there be light!

3 Spirit of truth and love, Life-giving, holy dove,

Speed forth Your flight;

Move on the water's face, Bearing the lamp of grace,
And in earth's darkest place
Let there be light!

△ 4 Holy and blessed Three, Glorious Trinity,
Wisdom, love, might!
Boundless as ocean's tide, Rolling in fullest pride,
Through the earth, far and wide,
Let there be light!

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READING

Luke 12:35–40 NIV

[Jesus said:] ³⁵ “Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning, ³⁶ like servants waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks they can immediately open the door for him. ³⁷ It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. Truly I tell you, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them. ³⁸ It will be good for those servants whose master finds them ready, even if he comes in the middle of the night or toward daybreak. ³⁹ But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. ⁴⁰ You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.”

L O Lord, have mercy on us.

C Thanks be to God.

- L** In many and various ways, God spoke to His people of old by the prophets.
- C** **But now in these last days, He has spoken to us by His Son.**

LSB 861 CHRIST BE MY LEADER

- 1 Christ be my Leader by night as by day;
Safe through the darkness, for He is the way.
Gladly I follow, my future His care,
Darkness is daylight when Jesus is there.
- 2 Christ be my Teacher in age as in youth,
Drifting or doubting, for He is the truth.
Grant me to trust Him; though shifting as sand,
Doubt cannot daunt me; in Jesus I stand.
- 3 Christ be my Savior in calm as in strife;
Death cannot hold me, for He is the life.
Nor darkness nor doubting nor sin and its stain
Can touch my salvation: with Jesus I reign.

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New Year's Message

COLLECT FOR PEACE

LSB, p. 251, adapt.

- P** O God, from whom come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works, give to us, Your servants,

that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey Your commandments and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness as we keep watch for Your reappearing; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

OFFERING

LSB 427 IN THE CROSS OF CHRIST I GLORY

- 1 In the cross of Christ I glory,
Tow'ring o'er the wrecks of time.
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime.
- 2 When the woes of life o'ertake me,
Hopes deceive, and fears annoy,
Never shall the cross forsake me;
Lo, it glows with peace and joy.
- 3 When the sun of bliss is beaming
Light and love upon my way,
From the cross the radiance streaming
Adds more luster to the day.

4 Bane and blessing, pain and pleasure
By the cross are sanctified;
Peace is there that knows no measure,
Joys that through all time abide.

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OUR PRAYERS

HOLY COMMUNION

INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNION

LORD'S PRAYER

P Taught by our Lord and trusting in His promises, we are bold to pray:

C **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 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 and the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.**

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

P 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 the disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is My ✝ body, which is given for you. This do 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 testament in My ✝ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

BROKEN & BEAUTIFUL

1 Verse 1

As we break this bread as we drink this cup

Lord we remember

How You gave Your life on a brutal cross

Lord we remember

2 Pre-Chorus

This is the way You've chosen to save

This is the way You make all things new (REPEAT)

3 **CHORUS**

Broken and beautiful

Extravagant love prodigal grace

Broken and beautiful

God's perfect justice mercy's embrace

4 Verse 2

As we break this bread as we drink this cup

Lord we remember

It was for my sin that Your flesh was torn

Lord we remember

5 Pre-Chorus and CHORUS

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BENEDICTION

P Thanking God for His faithfulness in the year now past, let us enter into the New Year confident of His blessing:

The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the ✝ Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve you.

C **Amen.**

LSB 809 GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS sts. 1, ref, 3

1 Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father;

There is no shadow of turning with Thee.

Thou changest not: Thy compassions, they fail not;

As Thou hast been, Thou forever wilt be.

Refrain

**ref Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy
faithfulness!**

**Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided;
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!**

**3 Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!**

Refrain

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