

↓ TOP^a ↓ down
FAITH ↓

**OUR GRACIOUS GOD IS WITH US THROUGH ALL
THE STORMS OF LIFE**

Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

BETHEL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH | York, Nebraska

June 23, 2024

SERIES THEME: A TOP-DOWN FAITH

The phrase “from the top down” is often used to denote a hierarchical system of management or governance. The will and beliefs and directives of those “at the top” are imposed—sometimes aggressively, sometimes even oppressively—on those below. From the top down. We have entered the second half of the Church Year, the half that focuses on the teachings of the Christian faith. We will see that Christianity is very much a top-down faith. Christian teachings come “from the top down,” but not in the sense that those teachings are oppressively imposed on us. When we call Christianity a “top-down faith,” we mean that it tells us things about God that are so beautiful and good—teachings that couldn’t possibly have originated from human thinking. The Christian faith contains teachings that are so wonderful that we would never even believe them unless God himself revealed their truthfulness to us. So, God sent his Spirit from heaven to earth—from the top down—to empower his children to believe that which would otherwise be totally unbelievable.

THEME OF THE DAY: OUR GRACIOUS GOD IS WITH US THROUGH ALL THE STORMS OF LIFE

A powerful tornado rolls through your neighborhood. A massive hurricane heads straight for your city. A bolt of lightning sends 300 million volts to earth. The raw power and unpredictability of storms can inspire both awe and terror. We cannot stop storms from coming. We can only hope to survive them. However, we know the Almighty God can stop storms. He can calm literal storms. He could remove metaphorical storms, other types of troubles and trials. So, if he can, why doesn’t he? Well, would you rather have a God who was distant from you but removed all the storms of life? Or would you rather have a God who allowed some storms to come but promised to be right there by your side within them, holding you close? May God give us the top-down faith that sees that the latter is by far the better option. God promises to be with us through all the storms of life. Sometimes he removes them. But when he doesn’t, it’s only because he has plans to use even storms for our eternal good.

Worship Leader
Organist/Pianist

Pastor Justin Wilkens
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Acknowledgments

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The Service, Setting Two (page 172 in Christian Worship 21)

Hymn: 504 We Sing the Almighty Power of God

Stand

In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Confession

CW 172

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

**If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just
and will forgive us our sins
and purify us from all unrighteousness.**

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

Holy God, gracious Father,

I am sinful by nature

and have sinned against you in my thoughts, words, and actions.

I have not loved you with my whole heart;

I have not loved others as I should.

I deserve your punishment both now and forever.

But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins

with his innocent suffering and death.

Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

Silence for meditation and reflection

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Lord, Have Mercy

In peace let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

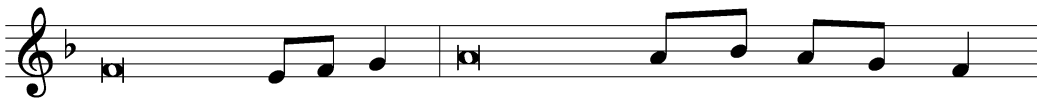
Lord, have mercy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

Amen.

Glory Be to God on High

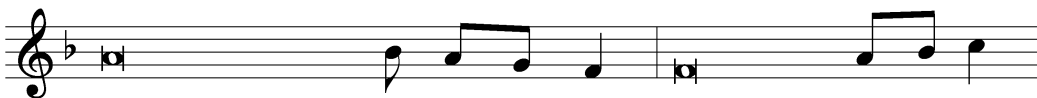
CW 157



Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will toward men.



We praise you, we bless you, we wor - ship you, we glorify you,



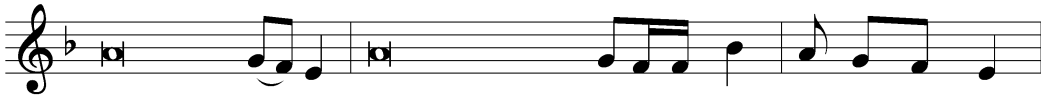
we give thanks to you, for your great glory, O Lord God, heav'n-ly King,



God the Fa-ther Al - mighty. O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Je-sus Christ;



O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sin of the world;



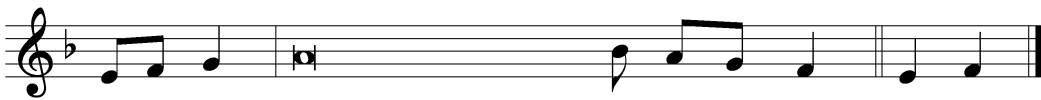
have mercy on us. You take away the sin of the world; re-ceive our prayer.



You sit at the right hand of God the Father; have mercy on us.



For you on-ly are holy; you on-ly are the Lord. You only, O Christ, with the



Ho - ly Spirit, are most high in the glory of God the Father. A - men.

THE WORD

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

O Lord our God, so govern the nations on earth and direct the affairs of this world that your church may worship you in peace and joy; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Be seated

First Reading

Job 38:1–11

Job questioned why God had allowed trouble to befall him. Out of a storm the Lord spoke to Job, explaining that no mere man has the capacity to understand the wonderful ways God works.

The LORD's Challenge to Job

¹Then the LORD responded to Job out of a violent storm. He said:

²Who is this who spreads darkness over my plans with his ignorant words?

³Get ready for action like a man!

Then I will ask you questions,
and you will inform me.

⁴Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?

Tell me, if you understand anything about it.

⁵Who determined its dimensions?

I am sure you know.

Who stretched out the surveying line over it?

⁶What supports its foundation?

Who set its cornerstone in place,

⁷when the morning stars sang loud songs together,
and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

⁸Who locked up the sea behind doors

when it burst out of the womb?

⁹When I clothed the sea with clouds,

when I wrapped it with thick darkness as its swaddling cloths,

¹⁰when I broke its power with my decree,

when I locked it up behind barred, double doors,

¹¹I said, "You may come this far, but no farther.

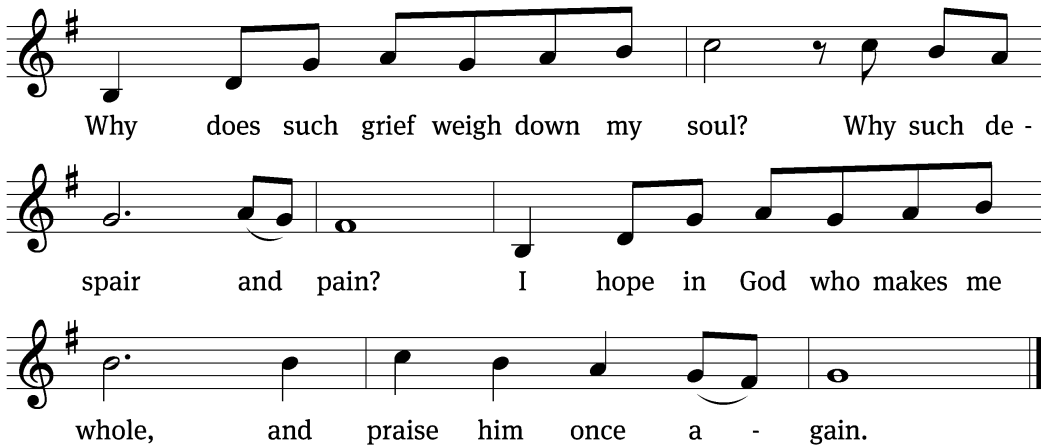
Here is the barrier for your proud waves."

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm of the Day: 42C Why Does Such Grief Weigh Down My Soul

Refrain



Why does such grief weigh down my soul? Why such de -
spair and pain? I hope in God who makes me
whole, and praise him once a - gain.

Tone



As the deer pants for streams of / water,
so my soul pants for / you, my God.
My soul thirsts for God, for the / living God.
When can I go and / meet with God?
My tears have been my food / day and night,
while people say to me all day long, "Where / is your God?" *Refrain*

These things I re- / member
as I pour / out my soul:
how I used to go to the / house of God
under the protection of the / Mighty One
with shouts of / joy and praise
among the / festive throng.

**Glory be to the Father and / to the Son
and to the Holy / Spirit,
as it was in the be- / ginning,
is now, and will be forever. / Amen. *Refrain***

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Second Reading

Acts 27:13–26

St. Paul and others were on a boat in the middle of a hurricane. God did not calm the storm. Yet, he was with them in the storm, accomplishing his good and gracious work.

¹³When a gentle south wind began to blow, they thought they could carry out their plan. They raised the anchor and sailed close to the shore of Crete.

The Storm

¹⁴But before long, a hurricane-like wind, called the “northeaster,” rushed down from the island. ¹⁵Since the ship was caught in it and could not head into the wind, we gave way to it and were driven along. ¹⁶As we sailed on the sheltered side of a small island called Cauda, we were barely able to secure the skiff. ¹⁷After hoisting it on board, the men tied ropes around the ship to reinforce it. Then, fearing that they would run aground on the sandbars of Syrtis, they lowered the sea anchor and in this way were driven along. ¹⁸Because we were tossed around so violently by the storm, the next day they began to throw the cargo overboard. ¹⁹On the third day, they threw the ship's gear overboard with their own hands. ²⁰When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days and the violent storm kept pressing down on us, finally all hope that we would be saved was disappearing.

²¹After they had gone a long time without food, Paul stood up among them and said, “Men, you should have followed my advice and not set sail from Crete and avoided this damage and loss. ²²But now I urge you to keep up your courage, because there will be no loss of life among you. Only the ship will be lost. ²³In fact, last night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve stood beside me ²⁴and said, ‘Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand before Caesar. And surely God has graciously given you all those who are sailing with you.’ ²⁵So keep up your courage, men, because I believe God that it will be exactly the way I have been told. ²⁶However, we must run aground on some island.”

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Stand

Gospel Acclamation

Mark 4:41



Hymn of the Day: 501 Evening and Morning

Sermon: Mark 4:35-41

Stand

Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**I believe 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 seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Be seated

Prayer of the Church

Eternal Lord, give us peace as we ponder the good news that you forgive our sins in Christ.
Lead us to see clearly the path you have laid out for us.

Work in us so that we believe and live the Word we have heard today.

Provide courage and compassion to all who preach and teach your Word. Fill them with a love like yours as they proclaim your grace to us and all people.

Move us to love all ministers of the Word wherever they serve.

Guard and guide the families of our congregation. Lead husbands and wives to love each other with commitment, respect, and patience. Help parents to grasp the eternal value of keeping their children close to Jesus all their lives. Grant joy to those who are single, and make them a blessing to others.

Protect us from the temptations that surround us; give us pure hearts and minds.

Provide wisdom and insight to those who make laws and set policies. Give us respect for those who protect us from crime. Lead us to value the rights of our fellow citizens and to defend those who cannot defend themselves.

Bless our land with peace and prosperity so that the gospel may be proclaimed to all.

Give us passion to share the story of your love with our family and friends. Overcome unbelief, and open the hearts of people everywhere to believe the good news that Jesus has forgiven their sins and opened the gates of heaven.

Fill us with joy over every sinner who repents and comes to trust in you.

Extend your healing power to those who are sick and suffering in body or mind. [Pour out your special blessing on . . . *here name the person and the cause of the petition.*] Give patience and compassion to all who care for the sick and dying.

Lift the eyes of the distressed to your love in Christ.

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

Silent prayer

Gracious God, you govern and direct all things and you love all people. Hear our prayers, spoken and silent, and answer them in your wisdom and grace.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Offering

Offering Hymn: 805 Eternal Father, Strong to Save

sts. 1–2

Lord's Prayer

**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.**

Almighty God, we thank you for teaching us the things you want us to believe and do. Help us by your Holy Spirit to keep your Word in pure hearts that we may be strengthened in faith, guided in holiness, and comforted in life and in death, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and + give you peace.

Amen.

Hymn: 874 Preserve Your Word, O Savior

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today: 10:30 AM Worship

Sunday: 10:30 AM Worship and Communion

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