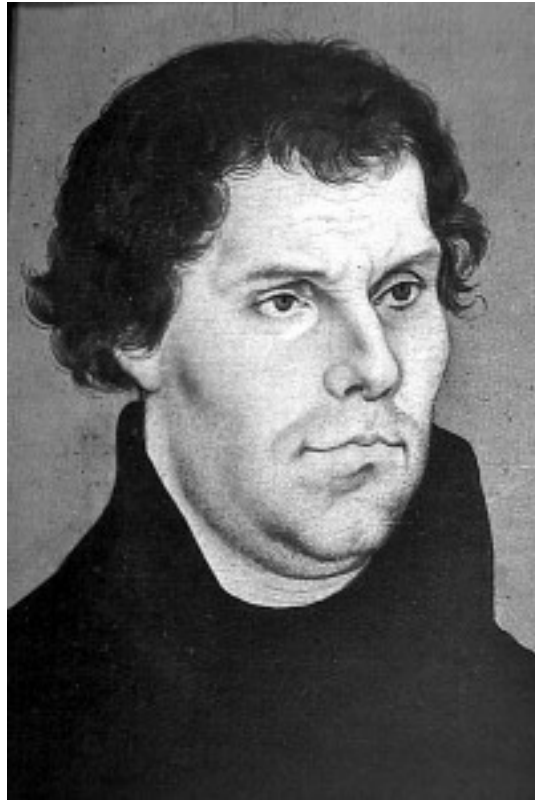


A Festival of Hymns



by

Dr. Martin Luther

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Auditorium

October 1, 2017

The Hymns of Martin Luther

Between August of 1523 and late summer of 1524, Martin Luther created 24 hymns. The effort was so extraordinary that the famous Meistersinger Hans Sachs called Luther “the Wittenberg Nightingale.” Thirteen more hymns were to follow.

What inspired Luther to such a task? Even before 1523 he was an experienced tenor with significant musical training. He had learned to see music as a gift from God, intended to lift the heart and touch the emotions. By 1523 he was also an experienced theologian who had come to love the gospel as a gift from God for the salvation of humankind. In his hymns Luther joined these experiences in order to proclaim the gospel to people in song.

Not all of Luther’s hymns were original poems. Some were translations or paraphrases of ancient hymns and psalms. He added stanzas to existing hymns to complete their theological confession. Some poems simply flowed from his heart of faith. The tunes which he and his colleagues paired with the new texts were often borrowed or modified from existing chants and ballads. Luther took advantage of the typical medieval practice of sharing tunes among a variety of texts, and the melodies he chose were often well known before they accompanied one of his new hymns. In an age when the ballad song was a critical method of communication, easily grasped by rich and poor alike, Luther’s marriage of biblical texts and well-known tunes carried the gospel across northern Europe with lightning speed. In homes, schools, and especially in worship, Luther’s hymns and those of his fellow reformers informed and deepened faith in the wonders of the gospel.

Tonight’s program features 15 of Luther’s 37 hymns. The hymns were specifically chosen to demonstrate a variety of his sources and purposes.

Hymns of the Ancient Church

Savior of the Nations, Come

Luther prepared a literal translation of an Advent hymn by Ambrose of Milan, 4th century, and modified the original tune.

Advent 1523

Come Holy Ghost, God and Lord

To an existing Latin hymn, Luther added two more stanzas and simplified the traditional plain chant melody.

May 1524

Grant Peace, We Pray, in Mercy, Lord

Luther translated this 10th century Latin antiphon so that the people of Germany might pray for the protection of the empire against the invading Turks. The tune is not based on the historic plain chant which accompanied the text, but imitates “Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word” which Luther likely composed.

1528-1529

Hymns based on the Psalms

From Depths of Woe I Cry to You

Based on Psalm 130, Luther likely wrote this text and others like it to fulfill the need for “German psalms” in his first order of service. Most scholars agree that Luther created the plaintive tune usually associated with this hymn.

Fall 1523.

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

The most famous of Luther's texts and tunes is often associated with Psalm 46, although it is actually an interpretation and application of the psalm. The tune is Luther's, although it includes musical phrases that Luther would have known from existing melodies.

Sometime in 1528 or 1529

Hymns for the Church Year

All Praise to You, Eternal God

Luther's decision to retain the historic church year required hymns that celebrated the events of the Savior's ministry. He expanded a well-known response for Christmas Day with additional stanzas and retained the traditional tune.

Christmas 1523

From Heaven Above to Earth I Come

Luther wrote this hymn for his children, and it may have been part of a family Christmas pageant in which Luther sang the angelic message and the children responded in the stanzas that followed. Originally, Luther paired the hymn with a well-known folk tune, but created the unique melody we know as the hymn gained popularity in Germany.

Over Christmas in 1534-1535

In Peace and Joy I Now Depart

Luther penned this paraphrase of the Song of Simeon (*Nunc Dimittis*) for the traditional Candlemas service (Presentation of Our Lord) held at the city church in Wittenberg. The tune is unique to the text, although scholars are not agreed about Luther's composition.

January 1524

Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Strong Bands

Although this is an original text by Luther, its roots go back to the 10th century. The original hymn was part of the Easter liturgy and gave birth to the well-loved folk hymn, "Christ Is Arisen." The tune, based on the folk song, is original to the text. In the entire history of Lutheranism, no other tune has been associated with this hymn.

Hymns for the Liturgy

We All Believe in One True God

On the basis of an earlier hymn which confessed the Trinity in a single stanza, Luther composed stanzas for each of the three Persons of the Trinity and explained their work in catechetical fashion. He also revised and simplified the original tune. When he prepared the German version of the historic service in 1526, this hymn naturally replaced the Latin *Credo*.

1524

Isaiah, Mighty Seer

Luther recast the historic *Sanctus* of the liturgy with a text from Isaiah 6:14. He also composed the melody for the new text, earning accolades from Johann Walter: "It is the German *Sanctus* which shows his perfect mastery in adapting the notes to the text." The hymn was introduced along with the new German service at the city church in Wittenberg on Christmas Day.

1526.

Hymns for the Catechism

Our Father, Who in Heaven Above

While many of Luther's hymns breathe with emotional intensity, the Reformer understood the value of poetry which simply passed along truth. This is obvious in his "catechism hymns." Luther authored this hymn on the Lord's Prayer for which he composed an original tune. He seems to have become dissatisfied with his tune, however, and adopted the VATER UNSER tune with which this text is universally paired.

1539

Hymns of Faith

Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word

Luther's last years witnessed serious trouble to church and empire. He offered this noble text as a prayer for the safety of God's people and composed a serious tune to accompany it. The hymn gained widespread use in Lutheran Germany as the invariable response to the Sunday sermon.

1541/1542

Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice

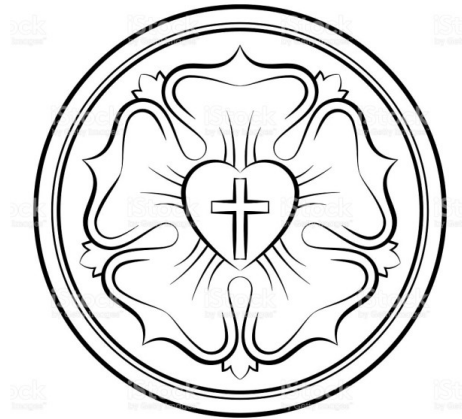
Undoubtedly his second hymn, Luther's text is a personal confession of his own relationship with God as well as a witness of God's plan to save the world from sin. The exuberant tune, probably Luther's own composition, accompanied the text in the *Achtliederbuch*, the first Lutheran hymnal, published in 1524.

1523

Sources:

Luther's Works, Volume 53, Ulrich Leupold, Editor

The Lutheran Choral: Its Basic Tradition, Johannes Riedel



*This hymn festival has been arranged in conjunction with **A Symposium on Reformation 500**. Over 500 pastors and pastoral students will gather in this auditorium on Monday and Tuesday to hear and study presentations by four WELS professors.*

THE HYMNS OF MARTIN LUTHER

Processional

Komm, Heiliger Geist, Herre Gott

Gottfried August Homilius (1714-1785)

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

Setting by Michael D. Costello, 2017

The choirs sing stanza 3. Stand for the final stanza.



1 A might - y for - tress is our God, a trust - y shield
2 With might of ours can naught be done; soon were our loss
3 Though dev - ils all the world should fill, all ea - ger to
4 The Word they still shall let re - main, nor an - y thanks



and weap - on; he helps us free from ev - 'ry need
ef - fect - ed. But for us fights the val - iant one
de - vour us, we trem - ble not, we fear no ill;
have for it; he's by our side up - on the plain



that has us now o'er - tak - en. The old e - vil foe
whom God him - self e - lect - ed. You ask, "Who is this?"
they shall not o - ver - pow'r us. This world's prince may still
with his good gifts and Spir - it. And take they our life,



now means dead - ly woe; deep guile and great might
Je - sus Christ it is, the al - might - y Lord.
scowl fierce as he will, he can harm us none.
goods, fame, child and wife, though all may be gone,



are his dread arms in fight; on earth is not his e - qual.
And there's no oth - er God; he holds the field for - ev - er.
He's judged; the deed is done! One lit - tle word can fell him.
our vic - to - ry is won; the king - dom's ours for - ev - er!

Be seated.

This setting was commissioned for the 2017 WELS National Conference on Worship, Music, and the Arts.

We All Believe in One True God

Setting by Matthew Machemer, 2017

The choirs sing stanza 2.

1 We all be - lieve in one true God, who cre - at - ed
 2 We all be - lieve in Je - sus Christ, his own Son, our
 3 We all con - fess the Ho - ly Ghost, who, sweet hope and
 earth and heav - en, the Fa - ther, who to us in love
 Lord, pos - sess - ing an e - qual God - head, throne, and might,
 com - fort giv - ing, now with the Fa - ther and the Son
 has the right of chil - dren giv - en. He in soul and
 source of ev - 'ry grace and bless - ing; born of Mar - y,
 in e - ter - nal light is liv - ing; who the Church, his
 bod - y feeds us; all we need his hand pro - vides us.
 vir - gin moth - er, by the pow - er of the Spir - it,
 own cre - a - tion, keeps in u - ni - ty of spir - it.
 He through snares and per - ils leads us, watch - ing that no
 made true man, our el - der broth - er; that the lost might
 Here for - give - ness and sal - va - tion dai - ly come through
 harm be - tide us. He cares for us by day
 life in - her - it, was cru - ci - fied by sin -
 Je - sus' mer - it. All flesh shall rise, and we
 and night; all things are gov - erned by his might.
 ful men and raised by God to life a - gain.
 shall be in bliss with God e - ter - nal - ly.

All Praise to You, Eternal God

Setting by Richard Wienhorst (1920-2010)

All praise to you, eternal God!
Now clothed in human flesh and blood,
You took a manger for your throne
While worlds on worlds are yours alone. Alleluia!

O little Child, you were our guest
That weary ones in you might rest;
Forlorn and lowly was your birth
That we might rise to heav'n from earth. Alleluia!

All this your love for us has done;
By this our love for you is won;
For this our joyful songs we raise
And shout our thanks in ceaseless praise. Alleluia!

Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice

All sing

CW 377

Dear Christians, one and all, rejoice, with exultation springing,
And, with united heart and voice and holy rapture singing,
Proclaim the wonders God has done, how his right arm the vict'ry won.
How dearly it has cost him!

Men sing

Setting by David Biedenbender, 2017

Fast bound in Satan's chains I lay; death brooded darkly o'er me.
Sin was my torment night and day; in sin my mother bore me.
Yet deep and deeper still I fell; life had become a living hell,
So firmly sin possessed me.

Women sing

Setting by David Biedenbender, 2017

My own good works availed me naught, no merit they attaining;
My will against God's judgment fought, no hope for me remaining.
My fears increased till sheer despair left naught but death to be my share
And hell to be my sentence.

All sing

CW 173

But God beheld my wretched state before the world's foundation,
And, mindful of his mercies great, he planned my soul's salvation.
A Father's heart he turned to me, sought my redemption fervently;
He gave his dearest treasure.

Choirs sing

Setting by Jan Bender (1909-1994)

He spoke to his beloved Son: "'tis time to have compassion.
Then go, bright Jewel of my crown, and bring mankind salvation.
From sin and sorrow set them free; slay bitter death for them that they
May live with you forever."

Organ Solo

Setting by Helmut Walcha (1907-1991)

The Son obeyed his Father's will, was born of virgin mother,
And, God's good pleasure to fulfill, he came to be my brother.
No garb of pomp or pow'r he wore; a servant's form like mine he bore
To lead the devil captive.

Choirs sing*Setting by David Biedenbender, 2017*

To me he spoke, "Hold fast to me—I am your rock and castle.
 Your ransom I myself will be; for you I strive and wrestle.
 For I am yours, your friend divine, and evermore you shall be mine;
 The foe shall not divide us.

Choirs sing*Setting by David Biedenbender, 2017*

"The foe shall shed my precious blood, me of my life bereaving.
 All this I suffer for your good; be steadfast and believing.
 Life shall from death the vict'ry win; my innocence shall bear your sin,
 And you are blest forever.

All sing*Setting by Jan Bender (1909-1994)*

"Now to my Father I depart, the Holy Spirit sending
 And, heav'nly wisdom to impart, my help to you extending.
 He will a source of comfort be, teach you to know and follow me,
 And in all truth will guide you.

All sing*CW 72*

"What I on earth have lived and taught be all your life and teaching;
 So shall my kingdom's work be wrought and honored in your preaching.
 Take care that no one's man-made laws should e'er destroy the gospel's cause.
 This final word I leave you."

From Heaven Above to Earth I Come*Setting by Dede Duson, 1982*

From heav'n above to earth I come to bear good news to ev'ry home;
 Glad tidings of great joy I bring, whereof I now will say and sing:

To you this night is born a child of Mary, chosen virgin mild;
 This little child of lowly birth shall be the joy of all the earth.

Give heed, my heart, lift up thine eyes, what is it in yon manger lies?
 Who is this child, so young and fair? The Christchild lieth there.

Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child, make thee a bed, soft, undefiled
 Within my heart, that it may be a quiet chamber kept for thee.

Glory to God in highest heaven, who unto us his Son hath giv'n!
 While angels sing with pious mirth a glad new year to all the earth.

Verleih uns Frieden*Heinrich Schütz (1585-1672)*

Verleih uns Frieden genädiglich,
 Herr Gott, zu unsern Zeiten;
 Es ist doch ja kein ander nicht,
 Der für uns könnte streiten,
 Denn du, unsr Gott, alleine.
 Gib unsern Fürsten und aller Obrigkeit
 Fried und gut Regiment,
 Daß wir unter ihnen
 Ein geruhig und stilles Leben führen mögen
 In aller Gottseligkeit und Ehrbarkeit. Amen.

*Grant peace, we pray, in mercy, Lord;
 Peace in our time, oh, send us;
 there is indeed no other
 who could fight for us
 than you, our God, alone.
 Give our rulers and all lawgivers
 peace and good government,
 that under them
 we might lead a quiet and peaceful life
 in all blessedness and honor. Amen.*

Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Strong Bands

Setting by Kevin Hildebrand, 2005

Stand.



1 Christ Je - sus lay in death's strong bands for our of - fens -
2 It was a strange and dread - ful strife when life and death
3 Here the true Pas - chal Lamb we see, whom God so free -
4 So let us keep the fes - ti - val to which the Lord



es giv - en; but now at God's right hand he stands
con - tend - ed. The vic - to - ry re - mained with life;
ly gave us; he died on the ac - curs - ed tree—
in - vites us; Christ is him - self the joy of all,



and brings us life from heav - en. There - fore let us
the reign of death was end - ed. Ho - ly Scrip - ture
so strong his love— to save us. See, his blood now
the sun that warms and lights us. Now his grace to



joy - ful be and sing to God right thank - ful - ly
plain - ly says that death is swal - lowed up by death;
marks our door; faith points to it; death pass - es o'er,
us im - parts e - ter - nal sun - shine to our hearts;



loud songs of al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!
its sting is lost for - ev - er. Al - le - lu - ia!
and Sa - tan can - not harm us. Al - le - lu - ia!
the night of sin is end - ed. Al - le - lu - ia!

Be seated.

Sonata VI in D minor: Vater Unser (Op. 65)

Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy (1809-1847)

Our Father, Who from Heaven Above

- I. Choral
- II. Andante sostenuto
- III. Allegro molto
- IV. Fuga
- V. Finale

A generous offering assists the seminary to cover the costs of this event. We thank you.

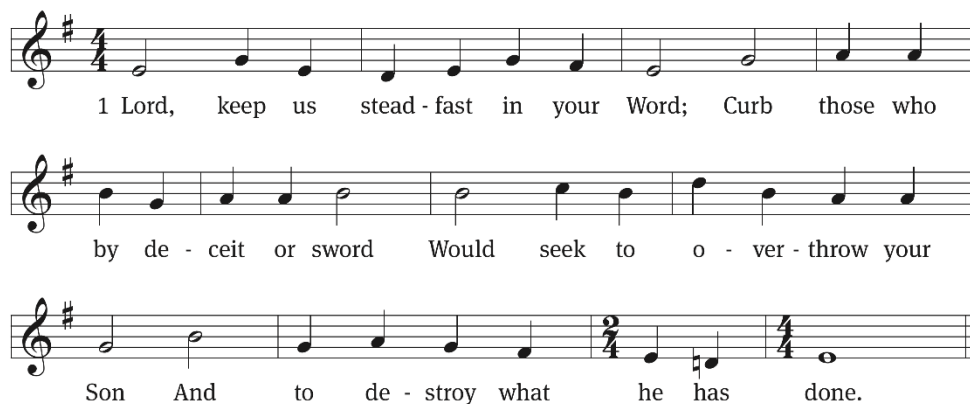
Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word

Arranged by John A. Behnke, 2016

Choir (Psalm 119:5-6)

Oh, that my ways may be steadfast
in keeping your statutes.
Then I shall not be put to shame.
Lord, keep us steadfast in your Word,

All sing

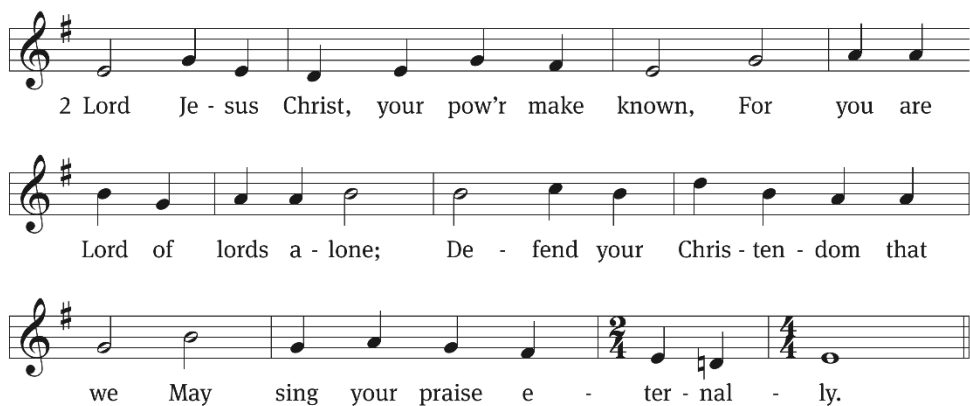


1 Lord, keep us stead - fast in your Word; Curb those who
by de - ceit or sword Would seek to o - ver - throw your
Son And to de - stroy what he has done.

Choir (John 8:31)

And Jesus said, "If you abide in my Word, you are truly my disciples."
Lord, keep us steadfast in your Word.

All sing

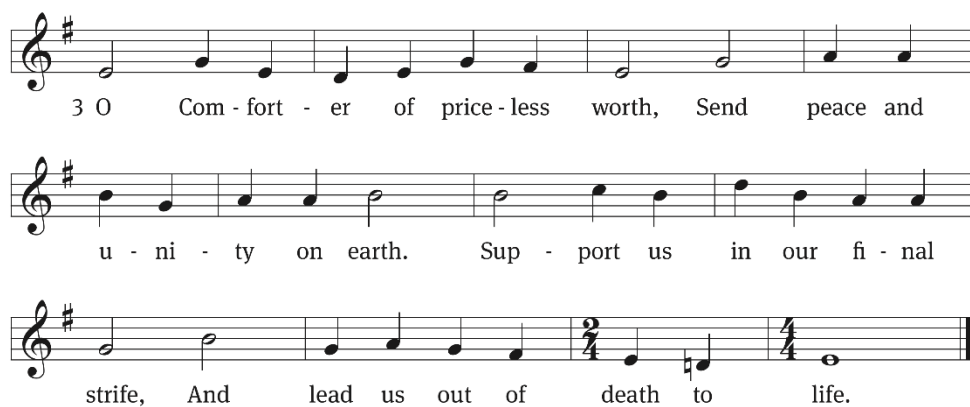


2 Lord Je - sus Christ, your pow'r make known, For you are
Lord of lords a - lone; De - fend your Chris - ten - dom that
we May sing your praise e - ter - nal - ly.

Choir (Ephesians 4:4-6)

There is one body, there is one Spirit, there is one hope for which we live,
one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all.
Lord, keep us steadfast in your Word.

All sing



Choir

Lord, keep us steadfast in your Word.

This anthem was commissioned for the 2017 WELS Conference on Worship, Music, and the Arts.

From Depths of Woe I Cry to Thee

*Settings by Johann Walter (1496-1570)
and Arnold von Bruck (1500-1554)*

From depths of woe I cry to thee; O Father, hear me calling.
Thy gracious ear incline to me, and to my pleas be open.
For if thou fix thy searching eye on sin and all iniquity,
Who dare, Lord, stand before thee?

Thy love and grace alone avail to blot out sin with pardon;
The best and holiest deeds do fail to break sin's dread oppression.
Before thee none can boasting stand, but all must fear thee, every one
And live alone by mercy.

Therefore, my hope is in the Lord and not in my own merit;
My heart shall trust his gracious Word; his goodness stays my spirit.
His precious Word assureth me; my comfort, my sure Rock is he.
This is my firm reliance.

Though great our sin and sore our woes, with God is much more mercy.
His hand's assistance hath no end however great our shame be.
He is alone our Shepherd true who wilt at last his Israel free
From all their sin and sorrow.

Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord

Setting by Ludwig Lenel (1914-2002)

Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord!
Be all thy graces now outpoured
On each believer's mind and heart;
Thy fervent love to them impart.
Lord, by the brightness of thy light
Thou in the faith dost men unite
Of ev'ry land and ev'ry tongue;
This to thy praise, O Lord, our God, be sung.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Thou holy Light, Guide divine,
Oh, cause the Word of life to shine.
Teach us to know our God aright
And call him Father with delight.
From ev'ry error keep us free;
Let none but Christ our Master be
That we in living faith abide,
In him, our Lord, with all our might confide.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Thou holy Fire, Comfort true;
Grant us the will thy work to do
And in thy service to abide;
Let trials turn us not aside.
Lord, by thy pow'r prepare each heart,
And to our weakness strength impart
That bravely here we may contend,
Through life and death to thee, our Lord, ascend.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

In Peace and Joy I Now Depart

Michael Praetorius (1571-1621)

In peace and joy I now depart to see my Father,
In sure repose my heart and mind gently waiting.
For the Lord did promise me my death but a sleep shall be.

Savior of the Nations, Come

Setting by Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Prelude: Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland

Orgelbüchlein (BWV 599)

The choirs sing stanzas 1-2. All sing stanzas 3 - 5 in harmony with the choirs.

1 Sav - ior of the na - tions, come; Vir - gin's
2 Not by hu - man flesh and blood, by the
3 Won - drous birth! O won - drous Child of the
4 From the Fa - ther's throne he came and as -
5 Praise to God the Fa - ther sing, praise to

Son, make here your home. Mar - vel now, O
Spir - it of our God was the Word of the
vir - gin un - de - filed, though by all the
cend - ed to the same, cap - tive to lead - ing
God the Son, our King, praise to God the

heav'n and earth, that the Lord chose such a birth.
God made flesh, wo - man's off - spring, pure and fresh.
world dis - owned, yet to be in heav'n en - throned!
death and hell. High the song of tri - umph swell!
Spir - it be ev - er and e - ter - nal - ly.

Isaiah Mighty Seer in Days of Old

Setting by Jeremy S. Bakken, 2017

Choir

Isaiah, mighty seer in days of old, the Lord of all in spirit did behold
High on a lofty throne, in splendor bright, with robes that filled the temple courts with light.
Above the throne were flaming seraphim; six wings had they, these messengers of him.
With two they veiled their faces as was right, with two they humbly hid their feet from sight,
And with the other two aloft they soared; one to the other called and praised the Lord:

Choir and congregation (in boldface)

Ho - ly is God, the Lord of heav'n - ly hosts!

Ho - ly is God, the

Ho - ly is God, the Lord of heav'n - ly

Lord of heav'n - ly hosts!

hosts! Ho - ly is God, the Lord of heav'n - ly

Ho - ly is God, the Lord of heav'n - ly hosts!

hosts! His

Ho - ly is God, the Lord of heav'n - ly hosts! His

glo - ry fills the heav - ens and the earth!

glo - ry fills the heav - ens and the earth!

Choirs

The beams and lintels trembled at the cry, and clouds of smoke enwrapped the throne on high.

This setting was premiered at the 2017 WELS Conference on Worship, Music, and the Arts.

Participants

The Wisconsin Lutheran College Choir

James A. Nowack, director

The Lutheran Chorale of Milwaukee

Mary J. Prange, director

The Seminary Chorus

James P. Tiefel, director

Aaron L. Christie

organist

Suzanne Swenson, *oboe*

Katherine Dogs, *oboe*

Adam Sipe, *trumpet*

Lucas Proeber, *trumpet*

Peter Plagenz, *trumpet*

Jeff Hatzung, *horn*

Eric Sipe, *trombone*

Dan Hubert, *trombone*

Joshua Wilsmann, *tuba*

Daniel Hafenstein, *timpani*

Zachary Semmann, *percussion*

Drew Dey, *percussion*

Alex Kirchenwitz, *percussion*

Future Events

Wisconsin Lutheran College Fall Showcase Concert

October 6, 7:30 p.m.
WLC Schwan Concert Hall

Southeastern Wisconsin District Reformation Service

November 5, 3:30 p.m.
Miller High Life Theatre, Milwaukee

The Lutheran Chorale Prelude to Christmas

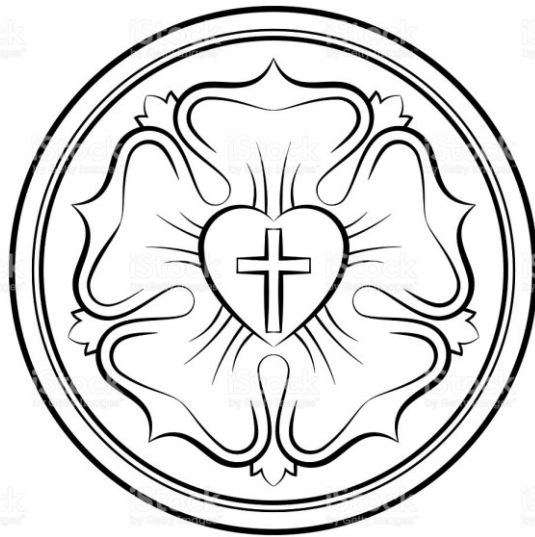
November 26, 2:00 and 4:30 p.m.
Abiding Word Lutheran Church, Milwaukee

Wisconsin Lutheran College Christmas Festival Concerts

December 1, 7:30 p.m.
December 2, 7:30 p.m.
December 3, 2:30 p.m.
WLC Schwan Concert Hall

The Seminary Chorus: Christmas at the Seminary

December 10, 3:00 & 7:00 p.m.
Seminary Auditorium



Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

11822 North Seminary Drive – Mequon, Wisconsin 53092 - www.wls.wels.net