

We acknowledge that the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of the Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee, and Anishinabek Nations, and the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation. This territory was the subject of the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant between the Iroquois Confederacy and the Ojibwe and allied nations to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes.

This territory is also covered by the Toronto Purchase, Treaty 13 of 1805, and the Williams Treaties of 1923. Today, our community is home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island. We gather by these territorial lands and waters to worship, listen, learn, share, and heal together in the name of our Creator, the Holy One of Blessing.

St. Paul's Lutheran Church

Lent Four

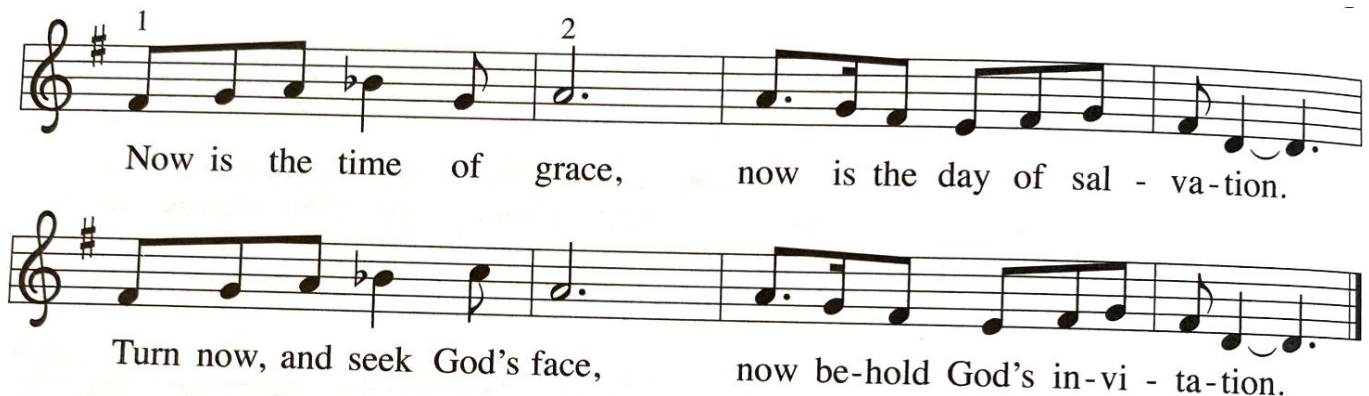
March 19, 2023

PRELUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

HYMN ACS # 918 NOW IS THE TIME OF GRACE

Congregation



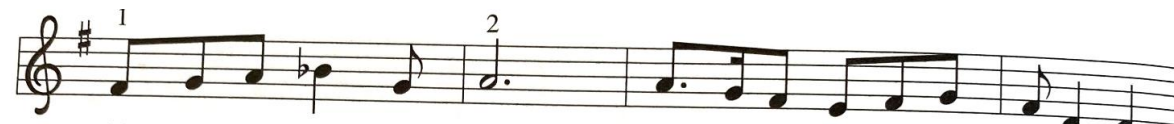
The image shows two staves of musical notation for the hymn 'Now is the Time of Grace'. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature (C). The melody starts with a quarter note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5. A first ending bracket (labeled '1') covers the notes G4, F#4, and E4. A second ending bracket (labeled '2') covers the notes D4, C4, and B3. The second staff continues the melody with a quarter note G3, followed by quarter notes F#3, E3, and D3. The lyrics are written below the notes.

Now is the time of grace, now is the day of sal - va - tion.
Turn now, and seek God's face, now be-hold God's in-vi - ta - tion.

Leader:

*This is the fast that God would choose,
To loose the bonds of injustice,
To let the captives go free,
And to break the yoke of oppression*

Congregation



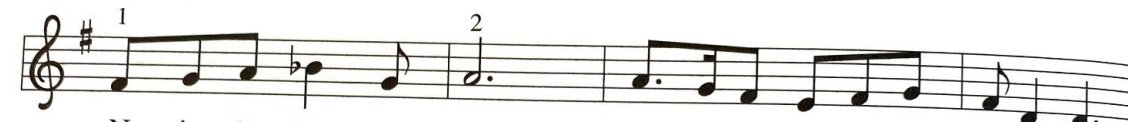
1 2
Now is the time of grace, now is the day of sal - va - tion.
Turn now, and seek God's face, now be - hold God's in - vi - ta - tion.

Detailed description: This block contains two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp). The first staff has two measures, with a first ending bracket over the first measure and a second ending bracket over the second measure. The lyrics are written below the notes. The second staff also has two measures with similar first and second endings. The lyrics continue below the notes.

Leader:

*Sharing your bread with the hungry
And welcoming homeless in,
Offering hope and offering help,
This is what God requires.*

Congregation



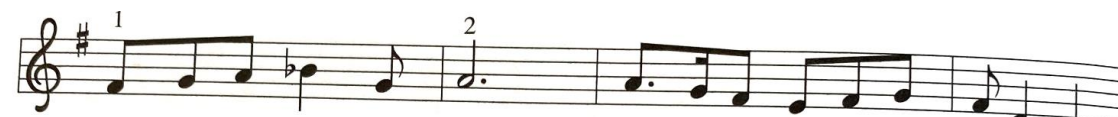
1 2
Now is the time of grace, now is the day of sal - va - tion.
Turn now, and seek God's face, now be - hold God's in - vi - ta - tion.

Detailed description: This block contains two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp). The first staff has two measures, with a first ending bracket over the first measure and a second ending bracket over the second measure. The lyrics are written below the notes. The second staff also has two measures with similar first and second endings. The lyrics continue below the notes.

Leader:

*Then shall your light break forth as dawn,
And healing shall come to you quickly;
Then you shall call and God shall answer,
God's love shall go before you.*

Congregation



1 2
Now is the time of grace, now is the day of sal - va - tion.
Turn now, and seek God's face, now be - hold God's in - vi - ta - tion.

Detailed description: This block contains two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp). The first staff has two measures, with a first ending bracket over the first measure and a second ending bracket over the second measure. The lyrics are written below the notes. The second staff also has two measures with similar first and second endings. The lyrics continue below the notes.

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Bend your ear to our prayers, Lord Christ, and come among us. By your gracious life and death for us, bring light into the darkness of our hearts, and anoint us with your Spirit for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

EPHESIANS 5:8-14

For once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light— for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, “Sleeper, awake! Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”

445 WASH, O GOD, OUR SONS AND DAUGHTERS

**Wash, O God, our sons and daughters,
where your cleansing waters flow.**

**Number them among your people;
bless as Christ blessed long ago.**

**Weave them garments bright and sparkling;
compass them with love and light**

**Fill, anoint them; send your Spirit,
holy dove and heart's delight.**

**We who bring them long for nurture;
by your milk may we be fed.**

**Let us join your feast, partaking
cup of blessing, living bread.**

**God, renew us, guide our footsteps;
free from sin and all its snares,
one with Christ in living, dying,
by your Spirit, children, heirs**

**Oh, how deep your holy wisdom!
Unimagined, all your ways!
To your name be glory, honour!
With our lives we worship, praise!
We your people stand before you,
water washed and Spirit born.
By your grace, our lives we offer.
Recreate us; God, transform!**

ORDER FOR HOLY BAPTISM *Vanessa Athea Rivera-Galan*
PRESENTATION

PASTOR: God, who is rich in mercy and love, gives us a new birth into a living hope through the sacrament of Baptism. By water and the word God delivers us from sin and death and raises us to a new life in Jesus Christ. We are united with all the baptized in the one body of Christ, anointed with the gift of the Holy Spirit, and joined in God's mission for the life of the world.

SPONSORS: I present *Vanessa Athea Rivera-Galan* for baptism.

PASTOR: *Patrick and Mary*, called by the Holy Spirit, trusting in the grace and love of God, do you desire to have *Vanessa* baptized into Christ?

PATRICK and MARY: *I do.*

PASTOR: *Joanna and Matthew*, as sponsors, do you promise to nurture *Vanessa* in Christian faith as you are empowered by God's spirit, and to help her live in the covenant of baptism and in communion with the church?

JOANNA and MATTHEW: *I do.*

PASTOR: People of God, do you promise to support *Vanessa* and pray for her in her new life in Christ?

All: We do.

PASTOR: I ask you to profess your faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin and confess the faith of the church.

Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God?

PARENTS & SPONSORS: *I renounce them.*

Do you renounce the powers of this world that rebel against God?

PARENTS & SPONSORS: *I renounce them.*

Do you renounce the ways of sin that draw you from God?

PARENTS & SPONSORS: *I renounce them.*

PASTOR: Do you believe in God the Father?

All: I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

PASTOR: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

All: I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

PASTOR: Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

All: I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

THANKSGIVING AT THE FONT

PASTOR: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

PASTOR: let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PASTOR: We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your spirit moved over the waters and by your word you created the world, calling forth life in which you took delight. Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family, and through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom. At the river your son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit. By the baptism of Jesus' death and resurrection you set us free from the power of sin and death and raise us up to live in you.

Pour out your Holy Spirit, the power of your living word, that those who are washed in the waters of baptism may be given new life. To you be given honour and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

BAPTISM

PASTOR: *Vanessa Athea*, is baptized in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

All: You belong to Christ, in whom you have been baptized.

PASTOR: Let us pray. We give you thanks, O God, that through water and the holy spirit you give your children new birth, cleanse them from sin, and raise them to eternal life. Sustain *Vanessa Athea* with the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever.

All: Amen.

PASTOR: *Vanessa*, child of God, you have been sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever.

All: Amen.

WELCOME (Presentation of Candle)

ASSISTING MINISTER: Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Let us welcome the newly baptized.

All: We welcome you into the body of Christ and into the mission we share: join us in giving thanks and praise to God and bearing God's creative and redeeming word to all the world.

GOSPEL JOHN 9:1-41

As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see.

The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight." They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them,

“He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.” Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath.” But others said, “How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?” And they were divided. So they said again to the blind man, “What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened.” He said, “He is a prophet.” The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?” His parents answered, “We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.” His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.” So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, “Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner.” He answered, “I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.” They said to him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?” He answered them, “I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?” Then they reviled him, saying, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.” The man answered, “Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.” They answered him, “You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?” And they drove him out.

Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” He answered, “And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.” Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.” He said, “Lord, I believe.” And he worshiped him. Jesus said, “I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind.” Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, “Surely we are not blind, are we?” Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.

REFLECTION

HYMN ELW # 779 AMAZING GRACE

Amazing grace, How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me.
I once was lost, but now I am found,
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved.
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come,
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far
And grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be,
As long as life endures.

When we've been there ten thousand years
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we've first begun.

PRAYERS

SINGING INTO PRAYER ACS # 921 RETURN TO GOD

**In all affliction. In all affliction..... return, return to God.
With great endurance
In every hardship
With humble spirit**

A brief silence

God of the covenant, you call us to be fruitful servants within creation,
and to offer our lives as the foundation of your reign. We lay before you the
desires of our hearts, that we may be transformed by their fulfillment.

A brief silence

Eternal God, you seal us by the Holy Spirit and mark us with the cross of Christ forever in baptism. Inspire us by your love as together we strive for justice and peace in all the earth. Bless Vanessa Athea, her parents, Mary and Patrick and her sponsors Joanna and Matthew with your love this day and always.

Merciful God.....**receive our prayer.**

Creating God, by your word you have made all things, and you hate nothing you have made. Teach us to perceive the beauty and breadth of your creation, from the grandest mountain to the smallest springtime bud. Tend to the needs of every living creature. Protect all enduring severe weather and nourish the earth to bring forth spring and summer growth.

Merciful God.....**receive our prayer.**

We pray for this nation and very nation, O God. Guide our leaders and decision makers with your wisdom. Encourage them to lead with justice and to remove barriers that impede the well-being of all. Let your peace empower all in Ukraine and Russia, calm the spirits of those in Palestine, Israel, Iran, and Pakistan. Wherever your people serve in harm's way—protect and enable them to act justly and with compassion.

Merciful God.....**receive our prayer.**

Holy God, you restore our souls. Draw near to exiles and accompany all refugees and immigrants. Keep watch over those who weep; tend all who are sick and comfort those who grieve. Wherever relief workers work tirelessly to aid the homeless and hungry, the dispossessed and poor—give them strength to care. We pray for the people of Turkey, and Syria.

We pray for all who need care and healing in our community among our friends and families.....

Pause

Merciful God.....**receive our prayer.**

God our host, you fill us at your table with more than we could ever ask. Deepen our love for you, for each other and for those who have yet to call you "Lord". Meet us on the road and change us as we learn more of your grace and love in our Lenten journey. Make our welcome your welcome to the study of scripture and times of worship and prayer.

Merciful God.....**receive our prayer.**

We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your steadfast love and your promise to renew your whole creation; through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Amen.

SINGING INTO PEACE ACS # 921 RETURN TO GOD

By speech that's truthful. By speech that's truthful.....return, return to God.

To cease oppression

By loving justice

With gentle kindness

SHARING THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

OFFERING

The offering will now be received and may God bless the gifts of your life

PRAYER OF PREPARATION

God of good gifts, receive these and all our offerings as we present them in faithful service for the sake of your gospel. Prepare our hearts to receive you in this meal as you pour out your very presence through Christ Jesus, the wellspring of eternal life. **Amen.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

Holy God, our living Water and our merciful Guide,

Together with rivers and seas, wells and springs

We bless and magnify you.

You led your people Israel through the desert,

And provided them water from the rock.

We praise you for Christ, our Rock and our Water,

Who joined us in our desert,

Pouring out his life for the world.

in the night in which he was betrayed, took bread, and gave thanks;

broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup,
gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.
Remembering, therefore, his life, death, and resurrection,
We await your salvation for all this thirsty world.
Pour out you Spirit on this holy food
And on all gathered for this feast:
Wash away our sin,
That we may be revived for our journey by the love of Christ.
Through him all glory and honour is yours,
Almighty God, with the Holy Spirit,
In your holy church, both now and forever.

Amen.

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.

Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever and ever.

Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come and receive Jesus, our strength in the wilderness. **Thanks be to God!**

HOLY COMMUNION

you are invited to eat your bread and drink your wine as you hear the words

"the body of Christ given for you" "the blood of Christ shed for you"

TABLE BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ strengthen us
and keep us always in his grace. **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Embodied God, at you table, we have tasted the goodness of Jesus. With the
eyes of our hearts open to your promise, empower us to hear the needs of our
neighbours and touch the world with your love. **Amen.**

BENEDICTION

God, the giver of love, + Christ, the resurrection and the life,
and the Holy Spirit of rebirth bless you in this Lenten journey. **Amen.**

HYMN ELW # 793 BE THOU MY VISION

**Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;
naught be all else to me, save that thou art.
Thou my best thought, by day or by night,
waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.**

**Be thou my wisdom, be thou my true word;
I ever with thee, and thou with me, Lord.
thou my soul's shelter, thou my high tow'r.
Raise thou me heav'nward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.**

**Riches I heed not, nor vain empty praise;
thou mine inheritance, now and always.
Thou and thou only, first in my heart,
Ruler of heaven, my treasure thou art.**

**Light of my soul, after victory won,
may I reach heaven's joys, O heaven's Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
still be my vision, O Ruler of all.**

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve in love. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE