

VIVA VOX

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by Ralph Gehrke & Kurt Eggert

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THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST: "THE LIVING VOICE"

This is the first of a contemplated series of circular letters which will be sent out to you from time to time. The general purpose is to help stimulate us pastors and church musicians to fresh efforts to make musical parts of our Sunday service ever more and more a living, gospel-centered experience.

Specifically, these letters are to tie in with our recently begun church music seminars – bringing you a review of discussions of the last meeting, and information about the next session.

Also, it is our deep and sincere desire that these letters, like the seminars, be an open forum, so that by a free and frank exchange of ideas we may help and edify one another.

We therefore invite any and all receiving these letters to contribute, send your questions, comments on the seminar discussions, ideas, practical suggestions, or reactions to this circular letter to either of the undersigned and it will appear in the next issue of "Viva Vox."

Ralph Gerhke

Kurt Eggert

IN THIS ISSUE...

THE FOUR TALKS presented by the members of the panel at our last seminar in Farmington...

OUTLINES AND HELPS for the Sundays of the Church Year from Easter to Trinity Sunday...

“MUSIC MUSINGS” ... A page of comments and suggestions. We invite you to contribute to this page...

MUSIC AND BOOK REVIEWS...

MUSICAL SETTING of the Sentence for the Season of Easter, to be sung by the choir.

NEXT MUSIC SEMINAR

Our next seminar will be held on the Second Sunday after Easter, April 24 at 2:30. Trinity Congregation at Watertown will be our host. You will receive more information and invitations from the pastor, Rev. Kurt Timmel and the organist, Misses Hertha Sievert and Dolores Schumann.

The program will include a panel presentation of the use of the Propers (Introit, Gradual, etc.); examples of music for the Propers; Question Box; Vesper service and lunch.

MUSIC MUSINGS

HYMN FESTIVAL

Would it not be a grand experience for 25 or 30 of our choirs to get together on a Sunday afternoon in one of our larger churches and sing some of our great Lutheran chorales? We have our Sunday services and choir concerts, but one thing we are missing is the joy of just getting together to make melody in our hearts to the Lord! At such a hymn festival we might sing in unison, in four-part harmony, or antiphonally by dividing up into choirs which would sing back and forth to each other. We might try a few of the chorales to which Bach has written sparkling organ accompaniments, or we could sing some easy descant to the chorales. It would also be a fine chance to get acquainted with one or two of our lesser known chorales. We might prepare a hymn-sing on one of the Lutheran chorales which each choir might then take back to its own congregation. There are lots of possibilities for an interesting and worthwhile afternoon.

Would your choir be interested in such a hymn festival, or could you get your choir interested?

YOUR MUSIC

We wonder what anthem or music your choir masters are preparing for Easter. Also what you organists are planning to play for that festival... Perhaps you had no trouble in selecting for the Easter festival, but what about other Sundays of the Church Year?

If each organist and choir master in our group kept a record of the music played and sung in his own church for one year, we could make up a list for everybody which would provide suggestions for the next year to fit our various kinds of organs and choirs.

Why not start that record now?!

CHURCH ORGANS

We wonder how many would be interested in hearing about the practical procedure in acquiring the right kind of organ for our Lutheran churches... Not every organ, not even every pipe organ, will enable an organist to project our Lutheran music, especially chorale preludes, properly. The fault does not always lie in lack of money!

Such practical and reliable information is available. We will try to have detailed information at our next seminar for those who are interested.

If you have a particular organ problem, we suggest to write to Prof. Paul Bunjes, River Forest.

SHARING THE WEALTH

With the high cost of music these days, the average choir is pretty limited in its purchases. Do you have an exchange arrangement with your neighboring choir? By pooling your libraries you can double your selection possibilities for your service music. We know that several in our seminar group are already doing this.

NARRATIVE SERVICE

Mention was made in passing at the last meeting of a narrative service as one way of bringing our people to a clearer understanding of the forms of our Divine Service.

A narrative service is simply one where brief explanations of the different parts of the liturgy are given as the service progresses. Thus, for example, the reader (who might stand on the chancel steps or below) could say before the reading of the Introit and singing of the Gloria Patri:

Each Sunday we Christians celebrate one of the events in the history of Salvation. Today (Advent I), at the beginning of the new Church Year, we celebrate our Lord's coming to us as Savior and King.

In today's Gospel we hear of his entry into Jerusalem. The Introit, which the pastor will now read, reflects the theme of today's service. It voices the eagerness with which we look forward to our Advent King, the king who comes to deliver us. We close the Introit by joining in the Gloria Patri, that is, a hymn of glory to the Triune God.

There now follows the reading of the Introit and the singing of the Gloria Patri.

Might not the use of such a narrative service once a year or so help congregation members to gain a better understanding of what the liturgy is all about, and so enable them to put their hearts into it? Should not our liturgy be a living expression of a living faith? And is this the ideal often not reached because the form of our liturgy is such a mystery to so many members??

If you should be interested in procuring a copy of such a narrative service as was quoted from above, contact St. Mark's Congregation of Watertown. It was used there for Advent I, 1953.

Would we perhaps care to have such a narrative service for ourselves at a future seminar?

MUSIC MUSINGS

NEW BOOKS

“Music In The Church” by Carl Halter

A highly practical book for pastors and church musicians. Since it comes out of our own Church, it fits our own needs. (Publisher: Concordia. Available in a few weeks.)

“Our Song of Praise” by E. Klammer

A new book of hymns for boys and girls. Hymns of our Hymnal plus new selections. Texts simplified where needed. A book of worthwhile songs our children will enjoy singing. (Publisher: Concordia. Two editions: Melody edition for children, \$1.25, and Full Music Edition with accompaniments by Paul Bunjes, \$2.95)

QUOTES

The best choir singer is the one who can produce the strongest tones without being heard above the rest.

—F.M. Christiansen

1 THE LITURGY

by Professor Ralph Gehrke

1

What can we do to make the musical parts of our worship a living, gospel-centered experience?

We would certainly misunderstand the question before us, if we should imagine that we, by our music techniques and practices, can add something to the power and effectiveness of God's own Means of Grace. But on the other hand, since we can stand in the way of the gospel by misusing or failing to understand the gifts God has given us in our Lutheran heritage, we have every right and duty to seriously consider such a question as that which has been presented for this panel seminar.

Among the various liturgical forms of worship which we have inherited from our Lutheran forefathers and which we now use, two are fundamental for our present consideration: the Divine Service and the Church Year.

1.1 BASIC ATTITUDES TOWARD THE LITURGY

First I would like to suggest some ways in which we can improve our own attitude and that of our congregations and choirs toward the worship forms that we are now using. It seems to me that we can do much more purposeful work if we look upon our Divine Service, our Liturgy, as a path of worship that leads us to God's wondrous gifts of Word and Sacrament. The Word and Sacrament are the focal points toward which we move in our Divine Service, and we should understand the various individual parts of the liturgy are only paths of prayer in which we travel toward these high points, at which God speaks to us through His Word and comes to us through His Sacrament. God's gifts, not our sacrificial offerings of prayer and praise, are the heart of our worship. Therefore all genuine understanding of the liturgy and of worship derives from a correct understanding and faithful use of the means of grace. The diagram which has been distributed makes it clear that the very structure of our liturgy is built up around these two gifts of God, while we travel the paths of Prayer, Praise, and Thanksgiving as we move to and from these high points of the service.

I also believe that we will get much farther in our church music work if we recognize what is fundamental in the order of our Church Year, namely the Gospel, for the particular festival or Sunday. The Gospel gives the tone to the entire service: to the propers of the liturgy (Introit, Gradual, Collect, Epistle, Seasonal Sentence, Proper Preface), to the sermon (regardless of whether the pastor preaches on the gospel itself or on a parallel pericope series), to the celebration of the Sacrament, to the hymns, to the organ and choir music. Musically it was and still is significant that in the great age of Lutheran music our church had even developed a fine series of de-tempore

hymns which fit the Gospel for the Sunday or festival. This gospel-centered character of our Church Year is exemplified both by the illustrated Church Year Cycle, originally prepared for St. Mark's Centennial which has appropriate symbols and themes of all the Sunday and festival Gospels of the Church Year radiating from the central Cross of Christ, and by the regraphed sheet which includes for the Advent and Christmas seasons: themes, a weekly verse, and suggested de-tempore hymns from our hymnal, all of which are derived from the Gospel for the Sunday or festival.

We can perhaps improve our own attitude and that of our people toward these two important forms of worship by means of discussions with various groups in our congregation (especially the choirs), by means of colorful plaques in our church and school which can capture the imagination of our people, by means of worship helps in our Sunday bulletins, by means of an annual Narrative Service such as initiated at St. Mark's Centennial celebration, by means of "hymn-sings" after the services and perhaps by other methods which I have not mentioned. But, best of all, we can go ahead and use the worship forms we now have in sincere faith.

1.2 PRACTICAL USE OF OUR LUTHERAN LITURGY

Finally, I would like to suggest some practical ways and means of making our liturgy what our question calls a "living, gospel-centered experience." One of the greatest dangers into which our divine service can fall is that it gradually becomes more and more a pastoral monologue. In the great era of Lutheran Church music you didn't have what has become almost the rule with us, namely that only two factors participate in the fellowship of Word and Sacrament: 1) the congregation, and 2) its pastor. Rather we find that four additional factors out of the congregation regularly took part of the service: 3) its choir (the "Kunstchor" which sang the difficult parts of the service, usually in harmony), 4) its organist (who was not only an accompanist, as with us, but also took part in the Wechselgesang or antiphonal music as an independent proclaimer of the gospel throughout service), 5) its boys choir (the "schola" or small circle of schoolboys who sang many of the propers, usually in unison) and 6) its cantor (a musician distinct from the organist, who often acted as "Vorsaenger" and generally directed the musical side of the service; Bach and Schuetz were the first of all cantors). It may be difficult for us to reactivate all these various features in our Sunday services, but this does seem to me to be the way down which we can well travel. Using the definite and permanent structure of the Divine Service and of the Church Year as the basis of their planning, choir directors, organists, pastors, teachers can plan for a clear-cut musical program long in advance in a purposeful manner. Such planning will be quickened by that exhilaration which comes to the choir, for instance, from regular vital participation in the worship service as an integral part of the praying and proclaiming congregation, and not just adding pleasing "frosting" to a rather sweet cake. At Menasha I heard teacher Zahn's school children sing the introits and graduals in the service, and they did a fine job. We at St. Mark's in Water-

town know from the Wechselgesang in the Centennial services the joy which comes to a choir which participates in a vital manner in the congregation's worship.

My last suggestion is that we follow the so-called principle of substitution in our use of the liturgy. Not only should various factors in the congregation (its choir, its organist, its pastor, its children) and the congregation itself be free to substitute for one another in the various parts of the liturgy, but also the various parts of the liturgy can be sung in different ways. For instance, instead of the usual setting of the Kyrie, the congregation or its choir or children could sing the hymn, "Kyrie, God Father in Heav'n Above" (L.H. 6) (particularly in the penitential seasons of Advent and Lent, or the choir could sing another harmonization of the Kyrie from our great Lutheran heritage. Instead of singing the usual setting of the Gloria in Excelsis (L.H. page 17) the congregation could sing the Reformation paraphrases antiphonally with the choir: "All Glory Be to God on High" (L.H. 237) or "All Glory be to God Alone" (L.H. 38). Instead of the recited Creed we could sing the paraphrase "We All Believe in One True God" (L.H. 251). Instead of the Sanctus setting (L.H. page 26) we could use Luther's paraphrase "Isaiah, Mighty Seer in Days of Old" (L.H. 249). Also, the choir can well help out and substitute for the whole congregation in alternate or selected verses of a hymn, so that the hymn is sung antiphonally (Wechselgesang). If this is done rather regularly with the de-tempore hymn of the Sunday or festival, choirmasters and choirs can plan with the pastors and organists for a long time ahead. Wechselgesang doesn't have to be done in harmony and is not necessarily a burden on the choir. At St. Mark's we found it also works well, if done only in unison by the choir.

Such are my suggestions for improving our attitude toward, and our use of, the musical parts of our liturgy.

2 OUR HYMNS

by Professor W. Wegner

2

Making our hymn-singing in the Divine Service Gospel-centered means not merely singing hymns which are based on or reflect some gospel truth. It means above all: selecting and singing only those hymns whose main thought is in harmony with the particular Gospel truth which the Church celebrates on a given Sunday or festival.

The key-note for each Sunday or festival of the Church Year is first sounded in each service in the Introit for the day; but it finds its full and complete expression in the Gospel for the Day. The Gospels for the Sundays and festivals are the very heart of the Church Year. They make our observance of our the entire Church Year a Gospel-centered experience.

The various propers for the day point to, underscore, and reinforce the teaching of the Gospel for the Day. They have a rightful place in the service only insofar as they have a direct relationship to the Gospel. Whatever is out of harmony with the day's Gospel disturbs the unity of the Service; whatever reinforces the teaching of the Gospel helps to make the Service a Gospel-centered experience. If, therefore, we wish to have our hymn-singing contribute toward making each service a unified Gospel-centered experience, then we must select our hymns in keeping with the Gospel for the Day.

It should be stated quite frankly that this view is in conflict with the practice of choosing hymns to harmonize with the sermon based on a free text which ignores the Gospel for the Day. The hymns of the Church Year will harmonize with the sermon when the pastor bases his sermons on the standard pericope texts of the Church Year, or at least on pericope texts which are close parallels to the standard pericopes. If we are convinced of the value of observing the Church Year as a means of keeping our worship Christ-centered and bringing to our people the whole counsel of God, then what justification is there for introducing into a given service either a sermon, or hymns, or both, which are disparate in theme to the Gospel for the Day? The burden of proof must rest with those who feel that there is justification for such arbitrary setting aside of the Gospel for the Day.

In past centuries the Lutheran Church have a fixed schedule of the de-tempore hymns. Some hymnals specifically designated certain hymns for the various Sundays of the Church Year. Today this correlation of the hymns to the respective Sundays of the Church Year is largely up to the pastor himself as he selects his hymns for a given service. The arrangements of hymns in our Lutheran Hymnal according to the Church Year is of some help here, although it should not be used mechanically since some hymns assigned by our hymnal to one season of the Church Year may also be

ideally suited for another. (E.g., Hymn 95, listed with our Christmas hymns, is traditionally also an Advent hymn. The "Table of Hymns for the Feasts, Festivals, and Sundays of the Church Year" in the Handbook of the Hymnal (p. 612 ff.) can be helpful, although the list is obviously incomplete and some of the suggestions it does make will not always be in harmony with the Gospel for the Day. The Handbook's listing of hymns in the "Index of the Biblical References" (p. 609) and in the "Index of Subjects" (p. 644) will not always be a reliable guide for the purpose of selecting hymns to harmonize with the Gospel, since in some cases the references are only secondary or incidental thoughts in certain hymns while the thought of the hymn as a whole may be out of harmony with the main thought of the Sunday or festival. The best suggestion that can be given is that each pastor carefully study our Lutheran hymnological heritage and become so fully acquainted with it that he will be able to choose for each day of the Church Year those hymns which are best and most fitting. As a guide to such study the (German) hymnological studies of Wilhelm Nelle and George Kempff are invaluable.

The thoughts of the previous paragraphs apply particularly to what we customarily call the Sermon-hymn. They should be kept in mind also in choosing the other hymns of the Service, although in the case of the first hymn a selection in keeping with the general season of the Church Year is in place. Nelle suggests that the "Hymn of Invocation" should be addressed to the particular person of the Holy Trinity whose festival is being observed or whose work is being commemorated on the particular day.

Whatever has been set up to this point is based on the principle that the basic guideline in selecting in him should be the text of the chorale, not the melody. Where the text of a hymn is suitable but its melody unfamiliar, steps should be taken to teach the new hymn tune to the congregation. (Our Seminar program will include practical suggestions and demonstrations of ways of doing this.)

Since the words and thoughts of the hymn are of primary importance, it should be taken for granted that in singing our hymns we take care to sing complete thoughts. If for compelling reasons the hymn cannot be sung in its entirety, its singing should be broken off only at the conclusion of such stanzas as bring the thought to a logical conclusion. As a general rule, however, it is best to sing all stanzas in the interest of the unity of thought.

A final suggestion may be added in the interest of making our hymn-singing more of a "living experience", and that is that we give serious consideration to the practice of singing hymns antiphonally. Not all, but certainly many of our hymns lend themselves to a ready division into units of thought which can be sung in a responsive manner. Certain hymn stanzas (or parts of stanzas) can be assigned to the choir, children's chorus, the congregation, or groups within the congregation. As one group sings, the others listen attentively until their singing in turn gives answer to

what they have heard. This laudable practice of “Wechselgesang” deserves to be revived in our midst (far beyond the two hymns in our hymnal, Nos. 87 and 199, which are now designated for such use) as a means of stimulating more thoughtful participation in our congregational hymn-singing. The judicious use of antiphonal song makes it possible to sing some of our longer hymns in their entirety without tiring the congregation, and in general serves to eliminate any element of monotony and to stimulate the interest and attention of all who participate.

Listen, in conclusion, to the words of Wilhelm Nelle as he tells what the introduction of antiphonal singing did for his congregation in Hamm, Germany. He writes:

Our congregational singing did not reach its full vitality... until we succeeded in gradually introducing into the Divine Service that group of festival hymns which is not only admirably suited for antiphonal singing between choir and congregation, but which, at least in part, seems even to be made for it. When choir and congregation answered one another in regular succession – as if in speech and reply, in invitation and response – not until then was there a real zest in our hymn-singing. And wherever – as in Hamm – the number of men attending the Divine Service approximates the number of women, there, after the congregation has become accustomed to antiphonal singing with the choir, one can also venture to have the men and women alternate in the singing of the stanzas. This, of course, is possible with only a few hymns, since the contents of the stanzas shouldn't somehow govern the interchange of singing between the men and women. But when we did this for the first time at Christmas with the hymn “Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ”, the joyous emotion of the congregation was readily discernible. And after the celebration one of our church officers stepped in the sacristy, deeply moved by this as well as all the antiphonal singing in the service, and said, “What singing that was! That was no mere singing, that was sheer exultation! I would never have thought it could be so wonderful in our church!”

3 THE ORGAN

by Professor H. Oswald

3

Before we can discuss with profit the ways and means by which we can make the organ music of our worship a living, Gospel-centered experience, we must be sure that we agree concerning the place of the organ in our worship. There is probably no quarrel about this among us, but we ought to state it as a fact agreed upon that the organist is one of the four legitimate participants in our normal form of worship. Like the congregation, its minister, and its choir, the organist performs a separate function that is to make a definite contribution toward creating that living, Gospel-centered experience which we call worship.

But once we have agreed upon the position of the organist, we can draw certain conclusions. These have to do with the organist's privileges as well as with his duties. Privileges and duties suggested a twofold activity of the organist: one, that of soloist, the other, that of accompanist.

As soloists our organists are expected to play a variety of pieces for organ, all of which can be included in the classifications prelude, interlude, postlude. But we must be careful to note that these classifications are meaningful. A true prelude introduces, a true Interlude joins, a true postlude brings to a close. While the organist is free to choose all this music, yet he is bound to select it in keeping with the parts of the service which he is introducing, joining, or bringing to a close. He will remember that he is serving a congregation which has set down a very definite theme for the whole service and which will be edified best if the organist's solos, too, adhere to the topic for the day. This principle will be the organist's guide as he selects his music.

On its part, the congregation that appoints the organist and requires of him the kind of preparation already described ought also to listen attentively to the organist's solo music. We must never assume that the organist's work is incidental and even irrelevant. We have asked him to prepare something for us. Let us hear him!

But the organist functions also as an accompanist. We want him to accompany our hymn singing and, if necessary, lead it. We do not want him to drown out our hymn singing, however. We urge great care upon the organists, therefore, that their accompaniment maybe effective, yet unobtrusive. What applies to the accompaniment of hymns should be said about liturgical responses also. Here too, careful accompaniment can do much to improve our worship.

Besides these functions there may be the requirement that our organist take turns with the congregation and the choir in the performance of some of our longer cho-

rules. The organist may be asked to interpret as an organ chorale a particular stanza during which the congregation silently reads the text.

Surely, in the application of all these principles we can do much to improve our worship and to make it more than ever before a living, Gospel-centered experience.

4 THE CHOIR

by Teacher O. W. Jungkuntz

4

The choir, too, certainly has its place in our order of service so as to make it more edifying and Christ-centered. It is my opinion that the proper place for the anthem would be immediately after the “Hallelujah” between the Scripture readings. This placement would enable the choirmaster to make a proper choice without being dependent on the text upon which the sermon might be based – an anthem or chorale which would emphasize the thought of the Gospel for the Sunday or festival and thus aid in making the service a related unit.

The choir might also be used to sing the Introit or other responses in the liturgy which would help to prevent our services from becoming too stereotyped.

In certain hymns the choir could also be employed to do antiphonal singing with the congregation.

It would seem to me that any use to which the choir may be put which would tend to make our people more alert and ready to hear is good and should be encouraged.

Sentence for Easter Season – Karl Hasse (musical score not included):

Hallelujah! Christ, our Passover, his sacrifice for us. Hallelujah!

Why not have your choir sing this sentence in place of the gradual during the coming Easter season.

GUIDE FOR THE CHURCH YEAR: EASTER TO PENTECOST

EASTER SUNDAY, THE FESTIVAL OF THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD

“Resurrection”

“I was dead; but behold, I am alive forevermore, and have the keys of hell and of death” (Rev. 1:18).

The Gospel: Matthew 28:1-8a. The first scene of Christian Divine Service: the grave. The first Easter congregation: the women who seek him who was crucified. The first Easter sermon: the message of the angels, “He is risen!”

The Gospel: Mark 16:1-8 The Angel proclaims the Resurrection Message: a) fear and fright are taken away from your soul; b) the place of Death is interpreted as the place of Resurrection; c) you yourself are summoned to spread this joyous news.

The Hymn for this Week: 195 Christ Jesus Lay in Death’s Strong Bands or 192 Awake, My Heart, with Gladness

THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EASTER (QUASIMODOGENITI)

“In White Garments”

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead” (1 Peter 1:3).

The Gospel: John 20:19-31 The Risen Lord gives his own the authority to forgive sins, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and overcomes the doubter, Thomas.

The Hymn for this Week: 206 Jesus Christ, My Sure Defense or 208 Ye Sons and Daughters of the King

THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER (MISERICORDIAS DOMINI)

“The Good Shepherd”

“I am the Good Shepherd, my sheep hear my voice and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life” (John 10:11, 27, 28).

The Gospel: John 10:11-16 Christ Jesus is the Good Shepherd; in his sacrifice we have the one standard according to which we can now judge who is a “shep-

herd." The sacrifice of this shepherd brings salvation even to those who live in distant lands.

The Hymn for the Week: 426 The Lord My Shepherd Is or 436 The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want

THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER (JUBILATE)

"The New Creation"

"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things have passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

The Gospel: John 16:16-23a Concerning the sorrow of separation and the joy of permanent reunion. The motto written over the life of every Christian: "A little while!"

The Hymn for this Week: 263 O Little Flock, Fear Not the Foe or 409 Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus

THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER (CANTATE)

"The Singing Church"

"Sing unto the Lord a new song, for he has done wonders" (Ps. 98:1).

The Gospel: John 16:5-15 Jesus explains the threefold work of the Holy Ghost: 1) He reveals to the world its sin, that it has in its blindness nailed God's Son to the cross; 2) He glorifies God's righteousness, which has exalted him whom the world rejected to the Right Hand of God; 3) He reveals the judgment upon the prince of this world, which has been wrought by Christ's death and rising.

The Hymn for this Week: 387 Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice

THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER (ROGATE)

"The Praying Church"

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (John 12:32).

The Gospel: John 16:23b-30 "Praying in the Name of Jesus" – that is a very short way of expressing the fact that our Lord Jesus who has been exalted to the heavenly world pleads our cause as our high priest before the throne of God; therein we receive the certainty that our prayer does not just evaporate into thin air, but that when we pray, we actually come into contact with the heavenly world,

“through our Lord Jesus Christ.” His path from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven is also pictured in that prayer which the Lord taught his disciples to pray.

The Hymn for this Week: 458 Our Father, Thou in Heaven Above

THE ASCENSION OF OUR LORD

“Ascension”

“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God” (Col. 3:11).

The Gospel: Mark 16:14-20 The Exalted Lord wishes to show himself to be the Lord, unto whom all power in heaven and earth is given through the work of his messengers. In the protection, gifts, power which he gives them will be revealed the fact that he is the living, present, active Lord.

The Hymn of the Week: 223 We Thank Thee, Jesus, Dearest Friend

THE SUNDAY AFTER ASCENSION DAY (EXAUUDI)

“The Expectant Church”

“Thus saith the Lord, I will pour out the Spirit of grace and supplication” (Zech. 12:10).

The Gospel: John 15:25-16:4 Christ prepares his disciples for the cross which they will have to carry. Christians travel the path of sorrows which the Lord once trod, but Christ does not abandon them. He sends them the Holy Ghost, the Comforter. He enables them to bear witness to the truth of God in the midst of trials and crosses of this world.

The Hymn of the Week: 267 If God Had Not Been on Our Side or 215 Draw Us to Thee

Note: The Scripture passages used above as themes for the various Sundays might be used as alternate Introits to the ones in our Hymnal.