

**"THE ORDER OF EVENING SERVICE OR VESPERS" \***

*A Hymn of Invocation of the Holy Ghost, or another Hymn may be sung.*

**The Hymn.****"Lord, Open Thou My Heart to Hear"**

*by Johannes Olearius, 1611-1684*

*Translated by Matthias Loy, 1828-1915*

1. Lord, open Thou my heart to hear  
And through Thy Word to me draw near;  
Let me Thy Word e'er pure retain,  
Let me Thy child and heir remain.
2. Thy Word doth deeply move the heart,  
Thy Word doth perfect health impart,  
Thy Word my soul with joy doth bless,  
Thy Word brings peace and happiness.
3. To God, the Father, God the Son,  
And God the Spirit, Three in One,  
Shall glory, praise and honor be  
Now and throughout eternity.

*The Lutheran Hymnal*

*Hymn #5*

*Text: Ps. 119: 140*

*Author: Johannes Olearius, 1671*

*Translated by: Matthias Loy, 1880*

*Titled: "Herr, oeffne mir die Herzenstuer"*

*Tune: "Erhalt uns, Herr"*

*1st Published in: \_Geistliche Lieder\_*

*Wittenberg, 1543*

¶ *Then shall be sung or said responsively the Versicle with the Gloria Patri as here follows. All stand.*

*Versicle.* O Lord, open Thou my lips.

***Answer.* And my mouth shall show forth Thy praise.**

*Versicle.* Make haste, O God, to deliver me.

***Answer.* Make haste to help me, O Lord.**

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;**

**As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.**

¶ *During the Passion Season the "Hallelujah" shall be omitted.*

**The Psalm—Psalm 45:7-17 (ESV).**

- 6 Your throne, O God, is forever and ever.  
The scepter of your kingdom is a scepter of uprightness;
- 7 you have loved righteousness and hated wickedness.  
Therefore God, your God, has anointed you  
with the oil of gladness beyond your companions;
- 8 your robes are all fragrant with myrrh and aloes and cassia.  
From ivory palaces stringed instruments make you glad;
- 9 daughters of kings are among your ladies of honor;  
at your right hand stands the queen in gold of Ophir.
- 10 Hear, O daughter, and consider, and incline your ear:  
forget your people and your father's house,  
11 and the king will desire your beauty.  
Since he is your lord, bow to him.
- 12 The people of Tyre will seek your favor with gifts,  
the richest of the people.
- 13 All glorious is the princess in her chamber,  
with robes interwoven with gold.
- 14 In many-colored robes she is led to the king,  
with her virgin companions following behind her.
- 15 With joy and gladness they are led along  
as they enter the palace of the king.
- 16 In place of your fathers shall be your sons;  
you will make them princes in all the earth.

<sup>17</sup> I will cause your name to be remembered in all generations;  
therefore nations will praise you forever and ever.

<sup>6</sup> Your throne, O God, is forever and ever.  
The scepter of your kingdom is a scepter of uprightness;

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

### **The Lessons.**

¶ *The Scripture Lessons shall then be read, then a Versicle and Response may be sung or said:*

### **The Old Testament Lesson.**

Isaiah 7:10-14 (ESV)

<sup>10</sup> Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz: <sup>11</sup> “Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” <sup>12</sup> But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test.” <sup>13</sup> And he said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? <sup>14</sup> Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Versicle: But Thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us.

**Answer. Thanks be to Thee, O Lord.**

### **The Epistle.**

Hebrews 10:4-10 (ESV)

<sup>4</sup> For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

<sup>5</sup> Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said,

“Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired,

but a body have you prepared for me;

<sup>6</sup> in burnt offerings and sin offerings

you have taken no pleasure.

<sup>7</sup> Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come to do your will, O God,  
as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.’”

<sup>8</sup> When he said above, “You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings” (these are offered according to the law), <sup>9</sup> then he added, “Behold, I have come to do your will.” He does away with the first in order to establish the second. <sup>10</sup> And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Versicle: But Thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us.

**Answer. Thanks be to Thee, O Lord.**

### **The Holy Gospel.**

Luke 1:26-38 (ESV)

<sup>26</sup> In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup> And he came to her and said, “Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!” <sup>29</sup> But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup> And the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup> And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. <sup>32</sup> He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, <sup>33</sup> and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”

<sup>34</sup> And Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I am a virgin?”

<sup>35</sup> And the angel answered her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. <sup>36</sup> And behold, your relative Elizabeth

in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. <sup>37</sup> For nothing will be impossible with God.”

<sup>38</sup> And Mary said, “Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.

Versicle: But Thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us.

**Answer. Thanks be to Thee, O Lord.**

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¶*Then may follow a SERMON, after which the Offerings may be gathered.*

When is she due? Well, it depends upon how far along she is. These are the questions and answers that bring joy to the wife of a husband and to her family. Her parents long to be grandparents.

When is she due? Well, it depends upon how far along she is. These are questions and answers that bring terror to the woman without a marriage. A woman who must be both parent and provider. Will her parents be gracious and grand? Will the State support her? Is God with her in her hour of need?

The women of the world want an option to choose God or not; to listen to one voice or another; to choose life or to choose death. Certainly God gives life; but, many are worried if they can keep the life they are given. The only other rational choice is deadly.

The flesh and blood of Eve wanted more out of life. She got less. Anything that she wanted would never be enough. For the worldly woman and her man, God is not good enough.

Back in the day, Eve wanted to hear another voice that was not the Word. One chat room led to another. Eve wanted to become wise as she used her own eyes to see the tree. Wait a second, wasn't she just walking with her husband as they looked to God who is Wisdom? But they turned from the LORD! Eve wanted to give to her man. Her man would take from her. Would he have eyes only for her? His eyes were opened. He saw their shame.

Paul writes to all the faith-based gathering in Rome. Death was all around the Italian peninsula and spreading down the Med. “Burnt offerings” and “Sin offerings” were not good enough. Rome would eventually burn under Nero. He blamed Christ and the Christians. Caesar called for sacrifice. Sacrifice the Christians in the arena. Drama and entertainment became the deadly reality. Death kept on spreading from one body to another. Will it ever end?

Surely “it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, “Sacrifices and offerings You (*my God*) have not desired, but a body have You prepared for me.”” Indeed, God has prepared a body, prepared for sacrifice.

Luke 1:26 In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup> And he came to her and said, “Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!” ... <sup>31</sup> And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus.” He will save us.

Why all this Christmas talk in March? March 25<sup>th</sup> is nine months before December 25<sup>th</sup>. In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy with John, Jesus was conceived of the Holy Spirit in the Virgin Mary. Mary was first troubled at the Word become flesh. Then, Mary rejoiced in her Savior.

The Bride of Christ rejoices in God's choice of life, an ancient promise now fulfilled in her hearing. The virgin did conceive, not of the sinful seed of Adam's race, but of the Holy Spirit who is one with the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. Together with the Father and Son, this one God is glorified. From the Glory of the Father, the Son was humbled, was conceived of the Holy Ghost, and in nine months from the Angel's speaking, was born of a Virgin Mary. He was humbled unto death, even the death of a Cross. That was our cross, our death. He gives new life.

The Church asked the question in the dark months of December: When is she due? Well, it depends upon how far along she is. Elizabeth was six months

along, Mary had just conceived. At that time God prepared a body. In His body He took what we were due. He was conceived for us, born for us, suffered for us, was dead for us and was buried for us. For us he shouted over hell. For us he rose on the third day. For us He ascended. And from the right hand of the Father He comes. Nothing shall separate us from Him.

The Church is the Bride of Christ. Nine months from Christmas, we ponder these things in our hearts. At first we are troubled. But on second thought, at each promise fulfilled in Christ we rejoice. "He does away with the first (*Word of Law*) in order to establish the second (*Word of Promise*).<sup>10</sup> And by that will (*and Grace*) we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." This is pure gift in the hearing of the Virgin. This is the joy of the Annunciation of our Lord to the Church.

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¶*Then shall be sung*

## The Hymn.

### Speak, O Lord, Your Servant Listens

By: Anna Sophia

1. Speak, O Lord, your servant listens,  
Let your Word to me come near;  
Newborn life and spirit give me,  
Let each promise still my fear.  
Death's dread power, its inward strife,  
Wars against your Word of life;  
Fill me, Lord, with love's strong fervor  
That I cling to your forever!
2. Oh, what blessing to be near you  
And to listen to Your voice;  
Let me ever love and hear You,

Let Your Word be now my choice!  
Many hardened sinners, Lord,  
Flee in terror at Your Word,  
But to me, who know my burden,  
Show me now our Word of pardon!

3. Lord, Your words are waters living,  
When my thirsting spirit pleads;  
Lord, Your words are bread life giving,  
On Your words my spirit feeds.  
Lord, Your words will be my light  
Through death's vale, its dreary night;  
Yes, they are my sword prevailing,  
And my cup of joy unailing!
4. Precious Jesus, I entreat You,  
Let Your words in me take root;  
Let this gift of heaven enrich me  
So that I bring generous fruit:  
Never take them from my heart  
Till I see You as You are,  
When in heavenly bliss and glory  
I will meet You and adore You!

*Hymn # 330 from Lutheran Worship*

*Author: Johann Schop*

*Tune: Werde Munter*

*1<sup>st</sup> Published in: 1658*

¶*Then, all standing, may be sung or said this Versicle.*

*Versicle.* Let my prayers be set forth before Thee as incense;

**Answer.** And the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.

**The Canticle.**

**Magnificat.**

**St. Luke 1:46-56**

My soul does magnify the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.  
For He has regarded the low estate of His handmaiden.  
For behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.  
For He that is mighty has done to me great things and holy is His name.  
And His mercy is on them that fear Him from generation to generation.  
He has showed strength with His arm.  
He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.  
He has put down the mighty from their seats  
and exalted them of low degree.  
He has filled the hungry with good things  
and the rich He has sent empty away.  
He has helped His servants Israel, in remembrance of His mercy  
as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed, forever.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost.  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be  
world without end. Amen.

### **The Prayer.**

Lord, have mercy upon us.

***Lord, have mercy upon us.***

Christ, have mercy upon us.

***Christ, have mercy upon us.***

Lord, have mercy upon us.

***Lord, have mercy upon us.***

¶*Then all shall say:*

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,  
for ever and ever. Amen.

*Salutation.* The Lord be with you.

***Answer.* And with thy spirit.**

Let us pray.

O Lord, as we have known the incarnation of Your Son, Jesus Christ, by the message of the angel to the Virgin Mary, so by the message of His cross and passion bring us to the glory of His resurrection; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

***Amen.***

*Versicle.* The Lord will give strength unto His people.

***Answer.* The Lord will bless His people with peace.**

**Collect for Peace.**

O God, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed; Give unto Thy servants that peace, which the world cannot give; that our hearts may be set to obey Thy commandments, and also that by Thee, we being defended from the fear of our enemies, may pass our time in rest and quietness; through the merits of Jesus Christ our Savior.

***Amen.***

¶*Then may be sung or said the*

**Benedicamus.**

*Versicle:* Bless we the Lord.

**Answer. Thanks be to God.**

¶The service may end with the Benedicamus, after which may be said

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion  
of the Holy Ghost, be with us all.

**Amen.**

¶At the close of the Service silent prayer should be offered.

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**\* Text from: *Evangelical Lutheran Hymn-Book***

**St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1912), pp. 19-23**

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