

The Lutheran Hymnal

Daily Office

Text Edition

Matins and Vespers belong to the "choir offices," daily divine services for the purpose of prayer and meditation on Scripture. The main component of the offices consists of the Psalmody, so much so, that in ancient and Medieval times, the entire Psalter was regularly prayed once a week. As "choir offices," these divine services are meant to be sung. A cursory glance at the Bible (1 Chr. 16:9; Ps. 105:2; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; James 5:13) indicates that the practice of singing the Psalms was not only the practice of the ancient, Medieval, and Reformation church, but it was the practice of God's people in both Old and New Testaments.

In "choir offices," the participating congregation is known as the "choir." It is generally divided into two parts, especially for the responsive singing of the Psalms. The Office is usually led by a Cantor and by a called and ordained Pastor. The proper role of the cantor is to lead the opening versicles, to sing the antiphons, and to lead the hymns and other anthems. The proper role of the Pastor is to read the Scripture lesson(s), to preach the Sermon (if one it to be given), to pray the Prayers, and to give the Blessing. Often the Pastor takes over the role of the Cantor.

In the absence of the Pastor, the Office may be led by others. Among mixed groups, an older man may be selected to lead the service. Among groups of women, an older woman may be selected to lead the service. If servants of the church (such as deacons, deaconesses, or parochial school teachers) be present, such persons are particularly apt to be chosen to lead the Office, having already been entrusted by the congregation with a particular responsibility.

When the Office is not led by a called and ordained pastor, the following changes shall be made: 1. In place of a possible sermon, an approved devotional reading is to be read. 2. The Salutation, "The Lord be with you: And with thy spirit," is either omitted, or replaced with, "O Lord hear my prayer: And let my cry come to Thee." 3. The Benediction is omitted. Observing these rubrics will help to confess the Scriptural doctrine of the divinely instituted distinction between the pastoral-teaching office and the royal priesthood (see James 3:1).

The Psalmody

At Matins, at least 1 Psalm, and as much as 9, (if readings are interspersed between every three Psalms) are to be sung. On ferias (days other than Sundays and feasts), Psalms 1-104 are used in sequence from the Hymnal. On Sundays and Feasts, Psalms are appointed on TLH p. 164-166.

At Vespers, at least 1 Psalm, and as much as 5, are to be sung. On ferias, Psalms 110-150 are used in sequence from the Hymnal. On Sundays and Feasts, Psalms are appointed on TLH p. 164-166.

The antiphon is sung by the Cantor before the Psalm. The first half of the choir then sings the first verse of the Psalm, the second half the second verse, and so on, singing responsively by whole verse until the end of the Psalm. As a fitting end for every Psalm, the "Glory be to the Father..." is sung by all in unison. If it is possible, the whole choir may then join the Cantor in the repetition of the antiphon. Longer Psalms marked with (ii) and (iii) count as two and three Psalms respectively. The Antiphons are accented for singing with 3-note termination tones, such as those provided in Lutheran Worship, Lutheran Book of Worship, and Hymnal Supplement 98.

As a Psalm at Matins (for simplicity's sake, as the first Psalm), a canticle may be sung (TLH p. 120-122).

Sunday: *Benedicite Omnia Opera.* At the king's commandment, the Three Holy Children were cast into the furnace, fearing not the flame of the fire, but saying: Blessed be our God, allelúia.

Monday: *Confitebor Tibi.* Thine anger is turned away, O Lord: and Thou comfortédst me.

Tuesday: *Ego Dixi.* So wilt Thou recover me: and make mé to live.

Wednesday: *Exultavit Cor Meum.* In the Lord my God doth my héart rejoice: for if He bringeth low, He also lífteth up.

Thursday: *Cantemus Domino.* The Lord is my Stréngth and Song: and He is become my Salvátion.

Friday: *Domine, Audivi.* In wrath remember mércy: O Lórd, our God.

Saturday: *Audite, Coeli.* The Lord Himself shall judge His péople: and repent Himself for His sérvants.

Beati Pauperes. Rejoice and be excéeding glad: for great is your

reward in héaven.

Dignus Est Agnus. Great and marvelous áre Thy works: Lord God Almighty.

Antiphons for the Psalms in TLH

1. Blessed is the man that doth meditate dáy and night: in the Law óf the Lord.
2. Serve the Lórd with fear: and rejoice with trémbing.
4. Have mercy upon mé, O Lord: and héar my prayer.
5. Hearken unto the voice óf my cry: my King ánd my God.
6. Save mé, O Lord: for Thy mércy's sake.
8. How excellent is Thy name in áll the earth: O Thou that hast dominion óver us.
13. Consider and héar me: O Lórd, my God.
14. The Lord looked down from héaven: upon the children óf men.
15. He that worketh ríghteousness: shall dwell in Thy holy híll, O Lord.
16. *1st verse of the Psalm.*
18. I will love Thée, O Lord: Thou who art my Deliverer, my God, ánd my Strength. (iii)
19. The statutes of the Lórd are right: rejoicing thé heart. (ii)
20. *1st verse of the Psalm.*
21. In Thine eternal stréngth, O Lord: Thine appointed Kíng shall rejoice.
22. Be not far from Me, for trouble ís near: for there is nóne to help. (iii)
23. In green pástures: the Lord my Shepherd shall féed me.
24. He that hath clean hands and a púre heart: shall ascend into the hill óf the Lord.
25. O my God, I trúst in Thee: let me not bé ashamed. (iii)
26. Thy loving-kindness, O Lord, is befóre mine eyes: and I have walked ín Thy truth.
27. My light and my salvátion: is thé Lord. (ii)
28. The Lord ís their Strength: and He is the saving Strength of His

anóinted.

30. *1st verse of the Psalm.*
31. Delíver me: in Thy righteousness, O Lord. (iii)
32. Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, ye ríghteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upríght in heart.
33. The Word of the Lórd is right: and all His works are dóne in truth. (ii)
34. The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that féar Him: and deliveréth them. (ii)
36. Thy mercy, Ó Lord: reacheth unto the héavens.
38. O Lord, chasten me not in Thy hot displeásure: for I am feeble and sore bróken.
40. The Lord inclined únto Me: and héard My voice. (ii)
42. Hope thou in God, for I shall yet práise Him: who is the Health of my countenance ánd my God.
43. Thou art the Health of my cóuntenance: and mý God.
45. Thou art fairer than the children óf men: grace is poured into Thy lips. (ii)
46. The Lord of hosts is wíth us: the God of Jacob is our réfuge.
47. Oh, shout únto God: with the voice of tríumph.
48. *1st verse of the Psalm.*
51. Wash me thoroughly, O Lord: from mine iníquity.
54. God is mine Hélper: the Lord is with them that uphóld my soul.
56. In God have I pút my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do únto me.
57. *1st verse of the Psalm.*
61. He shall abide before God foréver: oh, prepare mercy and truth, which may presérve him.
62. In God is my salvation and my glóry: and my refuge ís in God.
65. *1st verse of the Psalm.*
66. Come and see the wórks of God: and make the voice of His praise to be heard.
67. Cause Thy fáce to shine: O Lord, upón us.

68. Our God is the God of salvátion: and unto God the Lord belong the issues fróm death. (iii)
70. Be Thou my Help and my Delíverer: O Lord, make no tárrying.
72. Men shall be bléssed in Him: all nations shall cáll Him blessed. (ii)
75. Thy name, O God, is near to sáve us: Thy wondrous works decláre the same.
77. I will cry unto God wíth my voice: for God hath not forgotten to be grácious.
82. Arise, O God, júdge the earth: for Thou shalt inherit all nátions.
84. Blessed are théy that dwell: in Thy hóuse, O Lord.
85. Thou hast been favorable unto Thy lánd, O Lord: Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of Thy péople.
86. Give Thy strength unto Thy sérvant: and save the son of Thine hándmaid.
87. Glorious things are spoken óf thee: O city óf God.
88. Let my práyer, O Lord: come befóre Thee.
89. Mercy ánd truth: shall go before Thy fáce, O Lord. (iii)
90. *1st verse of the Psalm.* (ii)
91. *1st verse of the Psalm.*
92. Thou, Lord, hast made me glad thróugh Thy work: I will triumph in the works óf Thy hands.
93. *1st verse of the Psalm.*
95. Let us come before the Lord's presence with thanksgíving: and make a joyful noise unto Hím with psalms.
96. *1st verse of the Psalm.*
97. *1st verse of the Psalm.*
98. Oh, make a jóyful noise: before the Lórd, the King.
100. *1st verse of the Psalm.*
102. Let my cry, O Lord, come únto Thee: Hide not Thy fáce from me. (ii)
103. Like as a father pitieth his chíldren: so the Lord pitieth them that féar Him. (ii)
104. O Lórd my God: Thou art clothed with honor and májesty. (iii)

110. *1st verse of the Psalm.*
111. The works of the Lórd are great: sought out of all them that have pleasure thérein.
113. Blessed be the name óf the Lord: from this time forth and forévermore.
114. Tremble, thou earth, at the presence óf the Lord: at the presence of the God of Jácob.
115. Our God is in the héavens: He hath done whatsoever Hé hath pleased.
116. The Lord háth inclined: His ear únto me. (ii)
117. *1st verse of the Psalm.*
118. This is the gate óf the Lord: into which the righteous shall énter.
- 119i. *1st verse of the Psalm.*
- 119ii. Thy Word have I hid in míne heart: that I might not sin agáinst Thee.
- 119iii. *1st verse of the Psalm.*
- 119iv. *1st verse of the Psalm.*
- 119v. Make me to go in the path of Thy commándments: for therein do Í delight.
- 119vi. I will speak of Thy testimonies also befóre kings: and will not bé ashamed.
- 119vii. I have remembered Thy name, O Lord, ín the night: and have képt Thy law.
- 119viii. The earth, O Lord, is full of Thy mércy: teach me Thy státutes.
- 119ix. Thou art good, and dóest good: teach me Thy státutes.
- 119x. Let Thy tender mercies come unto me that Í may live: for Thy Law is mý delight.
- 119xi. *1st verse of the Psalm.*
- 119xii. I am Thine, sáve me: for I have sought Thy précepts.
- 119xiii. Through Thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every fálse way.
- 119xiv. Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage foréver: for they are the rejoicing óf my heart.

- 119xv. Uphold me according unto Thy Word that Í may live: and let me not be ashamed óf my hope.
- 119xvi. Deal with Thy servant according unto Thy mércy: and teach me Thy státutes.
- 119xvii. Make Thy face to shine upon Thy sérvant: and teach me Thy státutes.
- 119xviii. Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness: and Thy law ís the truth.
- 119xix. Hear my voice according unto Thy loving-kíndness: O Lord, quicken me according to Thy júdgment.
- 119xx. Plead my cause and delíver me: quicken me according tó Thy Word.
- 119xxi. Great peace have they which lóve Thy Law: and nothing shall offénd them.
- 119xxii. Let my supplication come befóre Thee: deliver me according tó Thy Word.
121. My help cometh fróm the Lord: which made heaven ánd earth.
122. Let us go with gládness: into the house óf the Lord.
124. Our help is in the name óf the Lord: who made heaven ánd earth.
125. The Lord is round about His péople: from henceforth even foréver.
126. The Lord hath done great thínings for us: whereof wé are glad.
130. *1st verse of the Psalm.*
132. The Lord hath chosen Zíon: He hath desired it for His habitátion.
(ii)
136. *1st verse of the Psalm.* (ii)
138. I will praise Thy náme, O Lord: for Thy loving-kindness and fór Thy truth.
139. *1st verse of the Psalm.* (ii)
143. Deliver me, O Lord, from mine énemies: I flee unto Thee to híde me.
145. The Lord is góod to all: and His tender mercies are over áll His works. (ii)

146. While I live, will I práise the Lord: I will sing praises unto my God while I have ány being.
147. Praise the Lord, O Jerúsalem: praise thy God, O Zíon. (ii)
148. *1st verse of the Psalm.*
150. Let everything that hath the bréath of life: praise the Lórd of life.

The Lection (Lesson)

On Sundays, Feasts and Festivals, the Gospel for the Day is read at Matins, the Epistle for the Day at Vespers (see TLH p. 159-161). The Old Testament for the Day may be read as a second reading at Vespers on the Eve of the Sunday, Feast or Festival. For ferias, readings are listed on TLH p. 161-164.

The Responary

For general instructions and texts of the responsories, see TLH p. 95. For simplicity in a congregational setting, the following suggestions may prove helpful: Before the first verse of the Responary, the Cantor should say (or chant) the refrain that the choir will repeat. He then gestures to the choir, and they repeat what he has said. The Cantor then recites the first verse of the responary, after which he gestures to the choir to recite their refrain, and so on. A fitting gesture is simply a hand raised in the direction of the altar, inviting the choir to offer their praises to Christ, whose altar it is. If these examples are followed, the choir will not need to have the text in front of them, but can simply respond to what they have heard. As an example, the responary for the Advent Season (TLH p. 95) is given here as it would be said in the Office:

Cantor: And this is His name whereby He shall be called, The Lord Our Righteousness.

Choir: And this is His name whereby He shall be called, The Lord Our Righteousness.

Cantor: Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.

Choir: And this is His name whereby He shall be called, The Lord Our Righteousness.

Cantor: In His days shall Judah be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely.

Choir: And this is His name whereby He shall be called, The Lord Our Righteousness.

Cantor: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost.

Choir: And this is His name whereby He shall be called, The Lord Our Righteousness.

Antiphons for the Gospel Canticles

It is desirable that the Benedictus be sung every day at Matins, with the Te Deum being sung on Sundays, Feasts, and Festivals as a responsory after the readings. Nevertheless, as the rubrics stand, the Te Deum is appointed to be used every day during Eastertide; the Benedictus is appointed to be used every day during Pre-Lent and Lent; in other seasons, the Te Deum is appointed to be used on Sundays, Feasts and Festivals, and the Benedictus on ferias. An antiphon may be sung with the Benedictus. An antiphon is never sung with the Te Deum.

It is desirable that the Magnificat be sung every day at Vespers, with the Nunc Dimittis being used privately at Compline. Nevertheless, as the rubrics stand, the Nunc Dimittis may be used if Vespers is sung late in the evening, as the last prayer before bed. An antiphon may be used with the Magnificat. The traditional, unchanging antiphon for the Nunc Dimittis is: "Guide us waking, O Lord, and | guard us sléeeping: that awake we may watch with Christ, and asleep we | may rést in peace."

The verticle bar line | indicates the point on TLH p. 38-39 and p. 43 where the cantor moves from the reciting tone to the termination. This bar line | corresponds to the first of the two or three bar lines for each half-verse in TLH.

Sunday. Ben. & Magn. *In the propers (generally taken from the Gospel of the Day).*

Monday. Ben. *1st verse of the canticle.*

Magn. *1st verse of the canticle.*

Tuesday. Ben. The Lord hath raised up a mighty salvation | f6r us: in the house of His | servant Dávid.

Magn. My | spirit háth rejoiced: in | God, my Sávi6r.

Wednesday. Ben. From the hand of all that | háte us: good | Lord, delíver us.

Magn. The Lord | hath regárded: the low estate of | His handmáiden.

Thursday. Ben. Let us serve the Lord in | hóliness: being delivered out of the hand | of our éemies.

Magn. Show, O God, | strength with Thíne arm: scatter the proud, and exalt | them of l6w degree.

Friday. Ben. Through the tender mercy | 6f our God: the Dayspring from on | high hath visitéd us.

Magn. He hath put down the mighty, who perse- | cute the hóly: and hath exalted the humble, who | put their trúst in Christ.

Saturday. Ben. Give light, O Lord, to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow | 6f death: and guide our feet | in the wáy of peace.

Magn. God hath holpen His | servant Ísrael: as He spake to Abraham, and to his | seed foréver.

The Prayers

After the Kyrie and the Lord's Prayer, the Collects are prayed. The first collect is always the Collect for the Day, that is, the collect prayed at the Divine Service on Sunday (see TLH p. 54 f.). This Collect of the Day is used from Saturday at Vespers (in anticipation of the Lord's Day) until Saturday at Matins. On Feasts and Festivals, the corresponding Collect of the Day is prayed at Vespers on the eve of the Feast or Festival, and then at Matins and Vespers on the day itself. After the Collect of the Day, other collects may be prayed (see TLH p. 102 f.). In a congregational context, the sick and suffering of the congregation are to be prayed for here. The last collect at Matins is always the Collect for Grace (TLH p. 40), at Vespers the Collect for Peace (TLH p. 45).

It is suggested that the Litany (TLH p. 110) be used at Vespers on Fridays. When used, it replaces everything from the Kyrie to the Collects inclusive. At the end of the Litany, one or all of the five Litany Collects shall be prayed. The Collect for Peace always follows as the last collect at Vespers. The order of service then continues on TLH p. 45 with the Benedicamus.

The Suffrages (p. 113) are proper to all ferias of Advent, Pre-Lent and Lent (as a general rule, whenever the liturgical color is violet). When used, the Suffrages replace everything from the Kyrie to the Benedicamus inclusive. Psalm 130 or 51,

together with its introductory versicle "Hear my prayer... And let my cry..." may be omitted. If not omitted, however, the number of Psalms prayed in the Psalmody may be reduced by one. At the rubric "Then may the Minister say a Collect.." the Collect of the Day and other collects are prayed. At Vespers, the order of service then continues with the introductory versicles and the Collect for Peace, followed by the *Benedicamus*, and then the Benediction (p. 45). At Matins, however, the order of service does **not** proceed to the Collect for Peace, but instead continues on TLH p. 40 with the Collect for Grace.

Private Prayers

Psalms not contained in TLH:

3, 7, 9-12, 17, 29, 35, 37, 38 (portions), 39, 41, 44, 49-50, 52-53, 55, 58-60, 63-64, 69, 71, 73-74, 76, 78-81, 83, 94, 99, 101, 105-109, 112, 120, 123, 127-129, 131, 133-135, 137, 140-142, 144, 149. These Psalms are to be used for private prayer (for example, early office of readings, or midday office of Sext).

Early Office of Readings (before or after Matins): "Make haste, O God to deliver me: make haste to help me, O Lord. Glory be... Alleluia."

Psalmody (Psalms not found in TLH are prayed in order).

Readings (A continual reading of the Holy Scriptures is recommended, along with the writings of the Early Church Fathers and the Book of Concord).

The Morning Suffrages, TLH p. 115.

Sext (Prayer at noon): "Make haste, O God to deliver me: make haste to help me, O Lord. Glory be... Alleluia."

The Hymn

The Psalmody (Psalms not found in TLH are prayed in order).

A brief Scripture verse may be read.

The Kyrie

The Lord's Prayer

The Collect of the Day

The Benedicamus and Blessing: Let us bless the Lord: Thanks be to God.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.

Devotion for the Household (after the main meal of the day):

Hymn

Reading from Holy Scripture

Reading from an approved devotional writing

Prayers: The Kyrie, The Lord's Prayer, other prayers. (OR: The Evening Suffrages, TLH p. 115).

The Benedicamus and Blessing: Let us bless the Lord: Thanks be to God.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.

A form of Compline (Prayer before bed):

Confession of Sins: TLH p. 6 "Almighty God, our Maker...", "O most merciful...", and "Almighty God, our heavenly Father..."

"Make haste O God to deliver me: make haste to help me O Lord. Glory be... Alleluia."

Psalmody: Psalms 4, 91, 134.

Brief Reading. (Jer. 14:9): "Thou, O Lord, art in the midst of us, and we are called by thy Name; leave us not, O Lord our God. Thanks be to God."

Nunc Dimittis (TLH p. 43-44). Antiphon: "Guide us waking, O Lord, and | guard us sléeeping: that awake we may watch with Christ, and asleep we | may rést in peace."

The Evening Suffrages, TLH p. 115.