

Pastor Janneke's Page

Faith Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, SD

February 11-12, 2017

"Then Sings My Soul"

Perhaps this will be an appropriate Pastor's Page for the back of an advertisement for "The Singing Saints"! Music certainly has the power to touch a saint's soul in special ways! I have seen some of the saints of Faith Lutheran sing out the Lord's songs even after losing other memories and capacities – sacred music helps us to hide God's Word in our hearts (Psalm 119:11) to be recovered someday.

As this time of Epiphany continues, we are also beginning our preparations for the season of Lent. (Ash Wednesday is on March 1.) Lent is characterized by a more somber, "minor-key" emphasis, particularly as we recognize that *our sins* are the reason for Christ's suffering on the cross. However, despite the heavy "Law emphasis" of Lent, there is such a powerful Gospel message coming for us this spring! I find that Gospel message shining in a surprising place: the dark and somber hymns of the Lenten season.

Dr. Heckmann's theme for this Sixth Weekend of Epiphany, "Rest for the Weary," got me thinking about some songs that invite us to rest in God's grace: "*Jesus, refuge of the weary, Blest Redeemer, whom we love, Fountain in life's desert dreary, Savior from the world above*" (LSB 423:1). "*Come to Calvary's holy mountain, Sinners ruined by the fall; Here a pure and healing fountain Flows for you, for me, for all, In a full, perpetual tide, Opened when our Savior died*" (LSB 435:1). "*I heard the voice of Jesus say, 'Come unto Me and rest; Lay down, thou weary one, lay down Thy head upon My breast.' I came to Jesus as I was, So weary, worn, and sad; I found in Him a resting place, And He has made me glad.*" (LSB 699:1) Listen for these and similar messages of resting in the saving grace of God during the upcoming Lenten season!

The Lord can often use music to restore our souls (Psalm 23:3). Perhaps this is one of the reasons that king David poured out his faith, his lamentations, and his praise in the Psalms—the first "hymnal" of God's people. Yet, our souls are *not* naturally inclined to praise the Lord. Without the Spirit drawing us to trust Christ, our souls only stray from Him. "*Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it; Prone to leave the God I love*" (LSB 686:3). No wonder we pray in our opening hymn this weekend, "*Come, Thou Fount of every blessing, Tune my heart to sing Thy grace; Streams of mercy never ceasing, Call for songs of loudest praise*" (LSB 686:1).

May God's Spirit keep "tuning our hearts," moving us to pray and praise and seek the Lord's help as we "sing His grace." Are there any particular Christian songs or hymns that the Lord uses to restore your soul? I'd love to hear about it – and sing with you!

Peace in Christ,

Pastor Kory Janneke

P.S. – "**The Singing Saints**" are the students of St. Paul Lutheran High School in Concordia, MO. They will be traveling to Sioux Falls to share an evening of sacred music with you on Sunday, March 5, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. The concert will be held at Memorial Lutheran Church (5000 S. Western Ave). Our own Lutheran High School of Sioux Falls choir will accompany "The Singing Saints" for portions of their concert – don't miss it!