

“Do Not Be Afraid. I Am The First And The Last, The Living One.”

By Rudolf Schäfer

OUR SAVIOR LUTHERAN CHURCH

Dr. Laurence White, Officiating • Jeff Armstrong, Organist

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COVER ILLUSTRATION – “I Am The First And the Last” by Dr. Rudolf Schäfer presents the awesome vision of our Lord Jesus as He revealed himself to the apostle John in the opening scene of the Book of Revelation. There Christ was standing amid the seven golden lamps which signified the church. Schäfer captures the essence of the vision as Christ upon the cross, shedding His precious blood to win forgiveness for the sins of mankind, dominates the entire image. Our Lord’s humble entrance into this world as the Babe of Bethlehem is shown in the left foreground. A joyful choir of angels proclaims the Christmas gospel above the stable and a gleaming star announces the Savior’s birth. In the right foreground stands the empty tomb with its resplendent guardian angel so that all might know that Jesus has conquered death for us. The beautiful life promise of the rainbow extends from the cross to the open door of the tomb. The risen Lord walks in the nearby garden behind the tomb awaiting the arrival of the women. The angels ascending from the empty tomb are carrying home the life harvest of God’s people. Over all is the extended hand of God the Father surrounded by the countless hosts of heaven, prophets and apostles, faithful men and women of God (including Martin Luther), those who have already received their share of God’s gracious gift of eternal life. Schäfer painted this masterpiece for the altar of the village church in Oberjesigen, Germany.

A Service of Thanksgiving Celebrating God's Gift of Eternal Life For



Steven Ray Fritsche

October 24, 1958 - November 11, 2021

*The death of a Christian has been transformed from tragedy into victory by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. At the moment of physical death the soul of the believer is safe at home in heaven with their Lord. Therefore, it is fitting and proper that those who remain - for a time - here on earth, would gather to celebrate God's gift of life and savor the memories of blessings received through our beloved who now lives with Christ in heaven. We affirm the faith in which they lived and through which they have been given eternal life in the sanctuary where they received the forgiveness of sins in Word and sacrament. **"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God."** (2 Corinthians 1:3-4)*

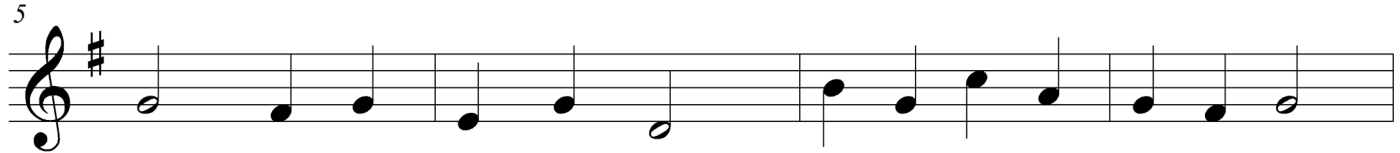
Opening Hymn

COME, CHRISTIANS, JOIN TO SING

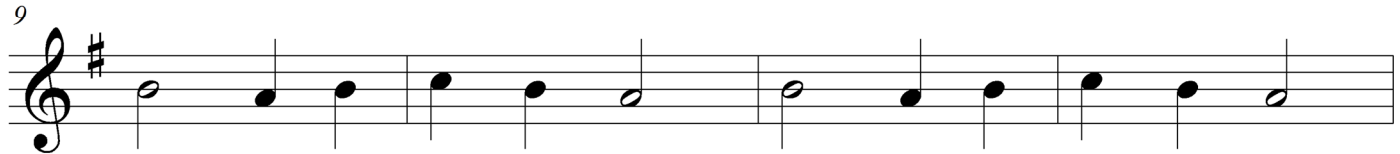
Text: Christian H. Bateman; Tune: "Madrid"



1. Come, Christ - ians, join to sing Al - le - lu - ia! A - men!
2. Come, lift your hearts on high, Al - le - lu - ia! A - men!
3. Praise yet our Christ a - gain, Al - le - lu - ia! A - men!



Loud praise to Christ our King; Al - le - lu - ia! A - men!
Let prais - es fill the sky; Al - le - lu - ia! A - men!
Life shall not end the strain; Al - le - lu - ia! A - men!



Let all, with heart and voice, Be - fore His throne re - jice;
He is our Guide and Friend; To us He'll con - des - cend;
On heav - en's bliss - ful shore, His good - ness we'll a - dore,



Praise is His grac - ious choice. Al - le - lu - ia! A - men!
His love shall nev - er end. Al - le - lu - ia! A - men!
Sing - ing for - ev - er - more, "Al - le - lu - ia! A - men!"

Invocation

Opening Prayers

Scripture Readings

PSALM 27:1

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?



PSALM 23

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures.
He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul.
He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil, for you are with me;
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

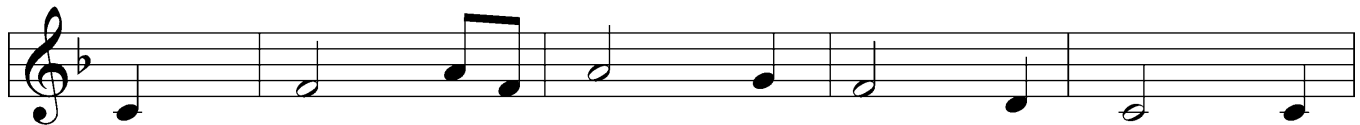
MARK 9:33-37; 10:13-16

[33] And they came to Capernaum. And when he was in the house he asked them, “What were you discussing on the way?” [34] But they kept silent, for on the way they had argued with one another about who was the greatest. [35] And he sat down and called the twelve. And he said to them, “If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all.” [36] And he took a child and put him in the midst of them, and taking him in his arms, he said to them, [37] “Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me, receives not me but him who sent me.” [13] And they were bringing children to him that he might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. [14] But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant and said to them, “Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. [15] Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.” [16] And he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on them.

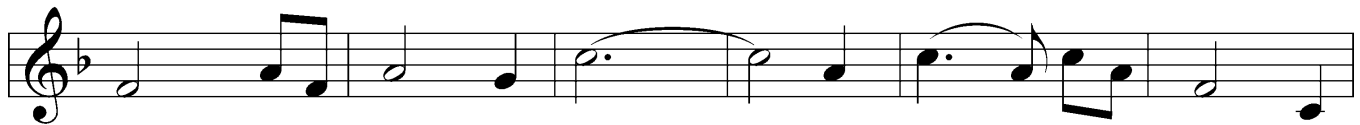
Hymn

AMAZING GRACE

Text: John Newton; Tune: “New Britain”; LSB #744 © 2006 CPH



1 A - maz - ing grace— how sweet the sound— That
2 The Lord has prom - ised good to me, His
3 Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares I
4 Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail And
5 When we've been there ten thou - sand years, Bright



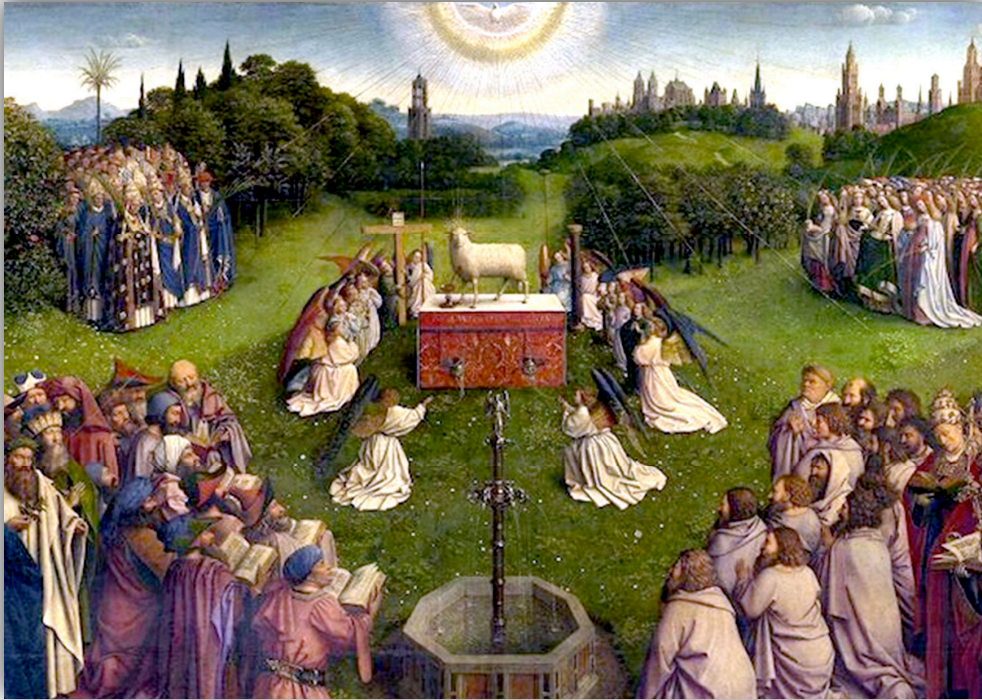
saved a wretch like me! I once was lost but
Word my hope se - cures; He will my shield and
have al - read - y come; His grace has brought me
mor - tal life shall cease, A - maz - ing grace shall
shin - ing as the sun, We've no less days to



now am found, Was blind but now I see!
por - tion be As long as life en - dures.
safe thus far, His grace will lead me home.
then pre - vail In heav - en's joy and peace.
sing God's praise Than when we'd first be - gun.

ROMANS 6:3-5

[3] Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? [4] We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. [5] For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.



REVELATION 7:9-17

[9] After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, [10] and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" [11] And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, [12] saying, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen."

[13] Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?" [14] I said to him, "Sir, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

[15] "Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence. [16] They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat. [17] For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

Sermon Hymn

ALL HAIL THE POWER OF JESUS' NAME

Text: Edward Perronet; Tune: Oliver Holden – “Coronation”; LSB #549 sts. 1-5 © 2006 CPH



1 All hail the pow'r of Je - sus' name! Let an - gels pros-trate fall;
2 Crown Him, ye mar-tyrs of our God, Who from His al - tar call;
3 Ye seed of Is - rael's cho - sen race, Ye ran - somed from the fall,
4 Hail Him, ye heirs of Da - vid's line, Whom Da - vid Lord did call,
5 Sin - ners, whose love can ne'er for - get The worm-wood and the gall,



Bring forth the roy - al di - a - dem And crown Him Lord of all.
Ex - tol the stem of Jes - se's rod And crown Him Lord of all.
Hail Him who saves you by His grace And crown Him Lord of all.
The God in - car-nate, man di - vine, And crown Him Lord of all.
Go, spread your tro-phies at His feet And crown Him Lord of all.



Bring forth the roy - al di - a - dem And crown Him Lord of all.
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There is no more poignant or powerful opportunity for the proclamation of the Biblical message of Law and Gospel than the moments in which Christians celebrate the home-going of a loved one to eternal life in the mansions of heaven. The funeral sermon is designed to declare that wondrous Gospel and to set before all present this day the truth that every believer is a sinner saved by grace alone. Salvation cannot be earned. It can only be given as a free gift by the God whose love for us moved Him to give His only Son to die in our place upon the cross so that we might live with Him forever.

Sermon

JOHN 8:12

[12] Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."



Obituary

Read by Dusty Fritsche

Prayers



The Lord's Prayer

(German)

Vater unser im Himmel,
geheiligt werde dein Name;
dein Reich komme;
dein Wille geschehe,
wie im Himmel so auf Erden.
Unser tägliches Brot gib uns heute.
Und vergib uns unsere Schuld,
wie auch wir vergeben unsern Schuldigern;
und führe uns nicht in Versuchung,
sondern erlöse uns von dem Bösen.
Denn dein ist das Reich und die Kraft
und die Herrlichkeit in Ewigkeit.
Amen.

Benediction

Closing Hymn

SENT FORTH BY GOD'S BLESSING

Text: Omer E. Westendorf; Tune: Welsh – "The Ash Grove"; LSB #643 © 2006 CPH

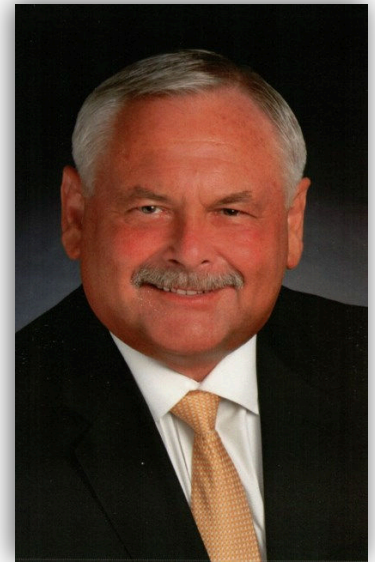
1 Sent forth by God's bless-ing, Our true faith con-fess-ing,
2 With praise and thanks-giv-ing To God ev-er-liv-ing,
The peo-ple of God from His dwell-ing take leave.
The tasks of our ev-'ry-day life we will face.
The Sup-er is end-ed. O now be ex-tend-ed
Our faith ev-er shar-ing, In love ev-er car-ing,
The fruits of this ser-vice in all who be-lieve.
Em-brac-ing His chil-dren of each tribe and race.
The seed of His teach-ing, Re-cep-tive souls reach-ing,
With Your feast You feed us, With Your light now lead us;
Shall blos-som in ac-tion for God and for all.
U-nite us as one in this life that we share.
His grace did in-vite us, His love shall u-nite us
Then may all the liv-ing With praise and thanks-giv-ing
To work for God's king-dom and an-swer His call.
Give hon-or to Christ and His name that we bear.

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STEVE FRITSCHÉ

Steven Ray Fritsche was born on October 21, 1958, in Houston, Texas to Eldor & Helen (Schiwart) Fritsche. He was baptized at Trinity Lutheran Downtown, and renewed his baptismal vows in his confirmation on April 15, 1973, at St. Mark Lutheran Church in Houston.

Steve grew up in Houston and attended Trinity Lutheran Downtown, St. Mark Lutheran School, and graduated from Spring Branch Senior High School in 1977. Steve was an exceptional athlete throughout middle and high school, starring in football and track and field for the Spring Branch Bears, and upon graduation went on to play football at Wharton Junior College.



He was united in marriage to Sharon Smith on September 25, 1982, at St. Mark Lutheran Church in Houston, Texas. The couple resided in Spring, Texas and became members of Trinity Lutheran in Klein, Texas. Steve worked as a sheet metal worker for 10 years with the Emde Company. He later changed professions and became a talented designer and project manager in the Consulting Engineering industry working for I.A. Naman, Smith Seckman Reid, Wylie Engineers and Garner Fritsche Engineering. After Sharon's passing in 2002, Steve was united in marriage to Kathy Rice on October 23, 2004, and the couple joined St. Timothy Lutheran Church. Steve served actively on the Board of Directors and the Board of Elders at St. Timothy, and joined Our Savior Lutheran Church in 2020.

Steve was a loving husband, father, grandfather, son and brother who worked hard to support his family. He had a strong sense of responsibility and commitment, tireless work ethic and a great sense of humor. Steve's grandchildren were a treasured source of joy in his life; they adored their "Paw-Paw," and Steve's face would light up whenever he talked about them or spent time with them.

In his spare time, Steve loved to play and watch golf, was an avid gun enthusiast, and enjoyed deep sea fishing and the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. But his favorite pastime was engaging friends and family in countless games of dominoes – Texas 42 – where Steve was widely regarded as the sharpest player at the table.

Steve was called to be with his Savior on Thursday morning November 11, 2021, at the age of 63 years and 21 days.

He was preceded in death by his father Eldor, wife Sharon, parents-in-law Wayne and Sybill Smith, and stepson Lee Bankhead.

Steve is survived by his mother Helen; son Dustin Fritsche and wife Jessica, son Chris Fritsche and wife Savannah and children Skyler, Jaxson, Gracie, Liam, RoseLynn, Mia and Noah, daughter Sara Perez and husband Tommy, Jr and their children Tommy III, Sophia, Mila and Jameson; stepchildren Bryan and Nicole Bankhead and their children Hayden Parks, Evelyn Bankhead and Bryson Bankhead; stepchildren Kerrie and Andrew Hebert and their children Kylie and Trevor; stepchildren Lee Bankhead and Tori Bankhead; brothers Alan and wife Christine, Kevin and wife Sharon, Anthony and wife Julie, and Nathan and wife Annie; and many other nieces, nephews, relatives and friends.