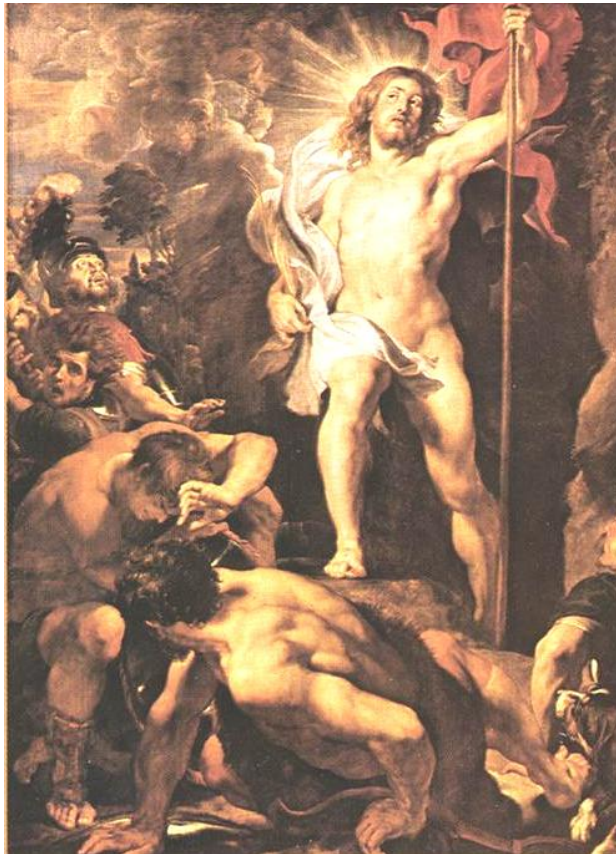


CELEBRATING THE ETERNAL VICTORY IN CHRIST GIVEN TO

Billy Ray Cookston
December 13, 1936 – March 28, 2025

Lazarus Saturday
April 12, 2025



“For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again,
even so, through Jesus, God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep.”

1 Thessalonians 4:14

ORDER OF SERVICE FOR A
— CHRISTIAN FUNERAL —

OPENING HYMN

Be Still, My Soul

#752

*The congregation stands to face the back of the church.
As the processional cross passes, the congregation turns to face the cross.*

Cantor: Be still, my soul; the Lord is on your side;
Bear patiently the cross of grief or pain;
Leave to your God to order and provide;
In ev'ry change He faithful will remain.
Be still, my soul; your best, your heav'nly Friend
Through thorny ways leads to a joyful end.

Congregation:



2 Be still, my soul; your God will un - der - take To guide the
3 Be still, my soul; though dear - est friends de - part And all is



fu - ture as He has the past. Your hope, your con - fi - dence let
dark - ened in this vale of tears; Then you will bet - ter know His



noth - ing shake; All now mys - te - rious shall be bright at
love, His heart, Who comes to soothe your sor - rows and your



last. Be still, my soul; the waves and winds still know
fears. Be still, my soul; your Je - sus can re - pay



His voice who ruled them while He dwelt be - low.
From His own full - ness all He takes a - way.

Cantor: Be still, my soul; the hour is hast'ning on
When we shall be forever with the Lord,
When disappointment, grief, and fear are gone,
Sorrow forgot, love's purest joys restored.
Be still, my soul; when change and tears are past,
All safe and blessèd we shall meet at last.

INVOCATION

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

REMEMBRANCE OF BAPTISM

The urn is covered with a funeral pall to symbolize the garment of Christ's righteousness that we received through Holy Baptism.

Romans 6:3-5

P In Holy Baptism Bill was clothed with the robe of Christ's righteousness that covered all his sin. St. Paul says, "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?"

C **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. 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.**

PSALM: DOMINUS REGIT ME

Psalm 23

Cantor: Shepherd me, O God, beyond my wants, beyond
my fears, from death into life.

All: *Refrain*

Shep-herd me, O God, be - yond my wants, be -
yond my fears, from death in-to life._____

God is my shepherd, so nothing shall I want, I rest in the meadows of faithfulness and love, I walk by the quiet waters of peace.

Refrain

Gently you raise me and heal my weary soul, you lead me by pathways of righteousness and truth, my spirit shall sing the music of your Name.

Refrain

Though I should wander the valley of death, I fear no evil, for you are at my side, your rod and your staff, my comfort and my hope.

Refrain

You have set me a banquet of love in the face of hatred, crowning me with love beyond my power to hold.

Refrain

Surely your kindness and mercy follow me all the days of my life; I will dwell in the house of my God forevermore.

Refrain

KYRIE

Lord, have mer - cy up - on us. Christ, have mer - cy up -
on us. Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY



P The Lord be with you.



C And with thy spir - it.



P Let us pray.

P O God of grace and mercy, we give thanks for Your loving-kindness shown to Bill and to all Your servants who, having finished their course in faith, now rest from their labors. Grant that we also may be faithful unto death and receive the crown of eternal life, through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



C A - men.

Please be seated

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Job 19:21–27

Have mercy on me, have mercy on me, O you my friends,
for the hand of God has touched me!

Why do you, like God, pursue me?

Why are you not satisfied with my flesh?

“Oh that my words were written!

Oh that they were inscribed in a book!

Oh that with an iron pen and lead

they were engraved in the rock forever!

For I know that my Redeemer lives,

and at the last he will stand upon the earth.

And after my skin has been thus destroyed,
yet in my flesh I shall see God,
whom I shall see for myself,
and my eyes shall behold, and not another.
My heart faints within me!

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalm 42:1-6a



As a deer pants for | flowing streams,*
so pants my soul for you, | O God.

My soul thirsts for God, for the | living God.*
When shall I come and appear be- | fore God?

My tears have been my food | day and night,*
while they say to me continually, “Where | is your God?”

These things I remember, as I pour | out my soul:*
how I would go with the throng and lead them in procession to the | house
of God

with glad shouts and | songs of praise,*
a multitude keeping | festival.

Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil with- | in
me?*

Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation | and my God.

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

EPISTLE READING

Revelation 21:1-7

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”

And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” And he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son.”

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Please stand

GOSPEL VERSE



A If we have | died with Christ,*
we shall also | live with Him;

C if we are faithful | to the end,*
we shall | reign with Him.

HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 8:5-13

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the eighth chapter.



C Glo - ry be to Thee, O Lord.

When he entered Capernaum, a centurion came forward to him, appealing to him, “Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, suffering terribly.” And he said to him, “I will come and heal him.” But the centurion replied, “Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof, but only say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I too am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. And I say to

one, ‘Go,’ and he goes, and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes, and to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.” When Jesus heard this, he marveled and said to those who followed him, “Truly, I tell you, with no one in Israel have I found such faith. I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” And to the centurion Jesus said, “Go; let it be done for you as you have believed.” And the servant was healed at that very moment.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.



C Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

Please be seated

OFFICE HYMN

A Mighty Fortress

#656

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1 A mighty fortress is our God,
 A trusty shield and weapon;
 He helps us free from ev'ry need
 That hath us now o'ertaken.
 The old evil foe
 Now means deadly woe;
 Deep guile and great might
 Are his dread arms in fight;
 On earth is not his equal.</p> | <p>3 Though devils all the world should fill,
 All eager to devour us,
 We tremble not, we fear no ill;
 They shall not overpower us.
 This world's prince may still
 Scowl fierce as he will,
 He can harm us none.
 He's judged; the deed is done;
 One little word can fell him.</p> |
| <p>2 With might of ours can naught be done,
 Soon were our loss effected;
 But for us fights the valiant One,
 Whom God Himself elected.
 Ask ye, Who is this?
 Jesus Christ it is,
 Of Sabaoth Lord,
 And there's none other God;
 He holds the field forever.</p> | <p>4 The Word they still shall let remain
 Nor any thanks have for it;
 He's by our side upon the plain
 With His good gifts and Spirit.
 And take they our life,
 Goods, fame, child, and wife,
 Though these all be gone,
 Our vict'ry has been won;
 The Kingdom ours remaineth.</p> |

HOMILY

HYMN

What Wondrous Love Is This

#543



1 What won-drous love is this, O my soul, O my soul! What
2 When I was sink-ing down, sink-ing down, sink-ing down, When
3 To God and to the Lamb I will sing, I will sing; To
4 And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing on; And



won-drous love is this, O my soul! What won-drous love is this That
I was sink-ing down, sink-ing down, When I was sink-ing down Be -
God and to the Lamb I will sing; To God and to the Lamb, Who
when from death I'm free, I'll sing on. And when from death I'm free, I'll



caused the Lord of bliss To bear the dread-ful curse for my
neath God's righ-teous frown, Christ laid a-side His crown for my
is the great I AM, While mil-lions join the theme, I will
sing His love for me, And through e-ter-ni-ty I'll sing



soul, for my soul, To bear the dread-ful curse for my soul!
soul, for my soul, Christ laid a-side His crown for my soul.
sing, I will sing, While mil-lions join the theme, I will sing.
on, I'll sing on, And through e-ter-ni-ty I'll sing on.

Please stand

APOSTLES' CREED

P God has made us His people through our Baptism into Christ. Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.

C **I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,**

suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life † everlasting. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

- P** Let us pray to the Lord, our God and Father, who raised Jesus from the dead: Almighty God, You have knit Your chosen people together into one communion in the mystical body of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Give to Your whole Church in heaven and on earth Your light and peace. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** hear our prayer.
- P** Grant that all who have been baptized into Christ's death and resurrection may die to sin and rise to newness of life and so pass with Him through the gate of death and the grave to our joyful resurrection. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** hear our prayer.
- P** Grant that all who have been nourished by the holy body and blood of Your Son may be raised to immortality and incorruption to be seated with Him at Your heavenly banquet. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** hear our prayer.
- P** Give to the family of Bill and to all who mourn comfort in their grief and a sure confidence in Your loving care that, casting all their sorrow on You, they may know the consolation of Your love. Lord, in Your mercy,
- C** hear our prayer.
- P** Give courage and faith to the bereaved, that within the communion of Your Church they may have strength to meet the days ahead in the assurance of a

holy and certain hope and in the joyful expectation of eternal life with those they love who have departed in the faith. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Help us, we pray, in the midst of things we cannot understand, to believe and find comfort in the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Receive our thanks for Bill and for all the blessings You bestowed on him in this earthly life. Bring us at last to our heavenly home that with him we may see You face to face in the joys of paradise. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P O God of all grace, You sent Your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, to bring life and immortality to light. We give You thanks that by His death He destroyed the power of death and by His resurrection He opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. Strengthen us in the confidence that because He lives we shall live also, and that neither death nor life nor things present nor things to come will be able to separate us from Your love, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

Matthew 6:9-13

P Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

C **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 forever and ever.

Amen.

- A** "I am the resurrection and the life," says the Lord. "He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in Me will never die."

Cantor sings stanza 1



1 In peace and joy I now de-part Since God so wills it.
 2 Christ Je - sus brought this gift to me, My faith - ful Sav - ior,
 3 You sent the peo - ple of the earth Their great sal - va - tion;
 4 Christ is the hope and sav - ing light Of those in blind - ness;



Se - rene and con - fi - dent my heart; Still - ness fills it.
 Whom You have made my eyes to see By Your fa - vor.
 Your in - vi - ta - tion sum - mons forth Ev - 'ry na - tion
 He guides and com - forts those in night By His kind - ness.



For the Lord has prom - ised me That death is but a slum - ber.
 Now I know He is my life, My friend when I am dy - ing.
 By Your ho - ly, pre - cious Word, In ev - 'ry place re - sound - ing.
 For Your peo - ple Is - ra - el In Him find joy and glo - ry.

- A** "I am the resurrection and the life," says the Lord. "He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in Me will never die."

CONCLUDING COLLECT

- P** Let us pray.

Lord God, our shepherd, You gather the lambs of Your flock into the arms of Your mercy and bring them home. Comfort us with the certain hope of the resurrection to everlasting life and a joyful reunion with those we love who have died in the faith; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

- C** Amen.

BENEDICAMUS AND BENEDICTION

A Let us bless the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Numbers 6:24–26

P The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

C Amen.

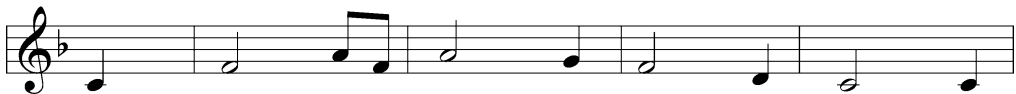
P Let us go forth in peace,

C in the name of the Lord. Amen.

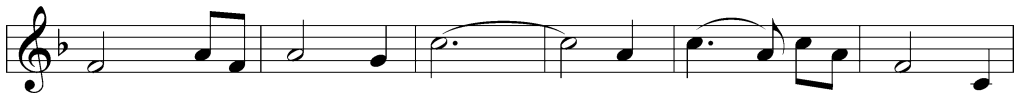
CLOSING HYMN

Amazing Grace

#744



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.

Acknowledgments

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Billy Ray Cookston **+ March 28, 2025 +**

Our Savior Jesus Christ has destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel. Let us remember with thanksgiving what God has done through His servant Bill.

Billy Ray Cookston was born in Royce City, Texas, on December 13th, 1936, to parents Alfred Marion Cookston and Willie Mae Warren Cookston. He was reborn as a child of God on in the waters of Holy Baptism, and later confirmed in the Christian faith on April 11th, 2009, ever thereafter to receive the divine medicine of immortality, Christ's life-giving Body and Blood.



The Lord graciously blessed Bill with a loving family: his brother James Cookston and sister Ginger Bailey; his wife Nadine Turner and their children, Michele Rae Cookston Fowler, and Peter Turner Cookston and his wife Melissa; his grandchildren Zachary, Lauren, and Olivia; his great-grandson Knox; his wife Brenda Price-Cookston, his step-daughter Michele Escude and her husband Craig, and their children Corinn and Gabriel.

The Lord had good use of Bill to touch the lives of those around him—as husband, father, friend, and neighbor—even to the very end of his earthly sojourn. On March 28th, 2025, God blessed him with a holy death and gathered him to the feast of salvation in His kingdom that has no end. Blessed are they who die in the Lord.

The Lord gives and the Lord takes away; blessed be the name of the Lord. We give thanks to God our Father through Jesus Christ, our Lord, for our brother Bill.



*Interment will take place following the service
at Parkway Memorial Cemetery
1161 Highland Colony Parkway, Ridgeland, MS.*

*A Meal will be served in the Church Fellowship Hall
immediately following the interment.
All family and guests are welcome to attend.*



Officiant: Rev. George Fields, Pastor
Elder: Eric Held
Organist: Sr. Sara Fields, Deaconess
Cantor: Craig Escude
Acolyte: William Held



CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
4423 I-55 North, Jackson, MS 39206-6102
Church phone: (601) 366-2055
www.ChristLutheranJacksonMS.org