



Isaac Watts

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**ST. MARY'S  
SERVICE OF HOLY EUCHARIST**

Including a reflection on the life and witness of

**ISAAC WATTS,  
HYMNWRITER, 1748**

**Wednesday, November 27, 2024**  
**<https://zoom.us/j/584949088>**

**COLLECT OF THE DAY**

*Celebrant:* God be with you

*People:* ***And also with you.***

*Celebrant:* Let us pray.

God of truth and grace, you gave Isaac Watts singular gifts to present your praise in verse, that he might write psalms, hymns and spiritual songs for your Church: Give us grace joyfully to sing your praises now and in the life to come; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

**PSALM 108:1-6**

*The St. Helena Psalter*

My heart is firmly fixed, O God, my heart is fixed;

I will sing and make melody.

Wake up, my spirit; awake, lute and harp;

I myself will waken the dawn.

I will confess you among the peoples, O God;

I will sing praises to you among the nations.

For your loving-kindness is greater than the heavens,  
and your faithfulness reaches to the clouds.

Exalt yourself above the heavens, O God,  
and your glory over all the earth.

So that those who are dear to you may be delivered,  
save with your right hand and answer me.

## THE HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 18:35-43

As he approached Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging. When he heard a crowd going by, he asked what was happening. They told him, 'Jesus of Nazareth is passing by.' Then he shouted, 'Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!' Those who were in front sternly ordered him to be quiet; but he shouted even more loudly, 'Son of David, have mercy on me!' Jesus stood still and ordered the man to be brought to him; and when he came near, he asked him, 'What do you want me to do for you?' He said, 'Lord, let me see again.' Jesus said to him, 'Receive your sight; your faith has saved you.' Immediately he regained his sight and followed him, glorifying God; and all the people, when they saw it, praised God.

The Word of the Lord

*People: Thanks be to God.*

## REMEMBERING ISAAC WATTS

Isaac Watts is remembered as the father of English hymnody. He was born in Southampton, England, in 1674, the eldest child of a devout Nonconformist family. His academic capabilities and particularly his ability with the English language were recognized at an early age. He was offered the resources to enroll at Oxford or Cambridge and pursue ordination in the Church of England, but Watts remained faithful to his background and in 1690 enrolled in a Nonconformist academy at Stoke Newington. In 1702, Watts was ordained and served the Mark Lane independent congregation in London for a decade before his health made it impossible to continue.

As a hymn writer, Watts wrote more than six hundred hymns, about a quarter of which continue in popular use. Among his works was his Psalms of David, a metrical psalter that versified the psalms in English for hymnic use. Perhaps his most enduring contribution in this genre is O God, our help in ages past, based upon the opening verses of Psalm 90.

Watts also wrote a wide variety of other hymns and spiritual songs that are well beloved. The attractiveness of his texts is often said to be reflective of Watts' own personal faith: gentle, quiet, sturdy, and deeply devout. This can easily be seen in the final stanza of When I survey the wondrous cross:

Were the whole realm of nature mine,  
That were an offering far too small;  
Love so amazing, so divine,  
Demands my soul, my life, my all!

Among his more enduring hymns are *Jesus shall reign, Joy to the world*, and *I sing the mighty power of God*.

Due to ill health, Watts spent the last decades of his life in semi seclusion, rarely preaching, but devoted his time to writing, as he was able. During this period, his writings take a new turn and he completed books on logic, human nature, and the English language, in addition to sermons, devotional literature, works for children, and more poetry and hymns.

Watts died in 1748. He is honored with a memorial in Westminster Abbey

## PRAYERS

*Prayers may be offered, silently or aloud.*

## HOLY EUCHARIST

Form A (*Enriching Our Worship*, p. 65)

*Celebrant* The Lord be with you.

*People* ***And also with you.***

*Celebrant* Lift up your hearts.

*People* ***We lift them to the Lord.***

*Celebrant* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

*People* ***It is right to give God thanks and praise.***

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Almighty God, Creator of heaven and earth, for the wonderful grace and virtue declared in all your saints, who have been the chosen vessels of your grace, and the lights of the world in their generations.

And so we join the saints and angels in proclaiming your glory, as we say,

*Celebrant and People*

***Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.***

***Hosanna in the highest.***

***Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.***

***Hosanna in the highest.***

And so, Loving God, we who have been redeemed by Christ, and made a new people by water and the Spirit, now bring before you these gifts. Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ our Lord.

*At the following words concerning the bread, the Celebrant is to hold it, or lay a hand upon it; and at the words concerning the cup, to hold or place a hand upon the cup and any other vessel containing wine to be consecrated.*

On the night before he died for us, our Savior Jesus Christ took bread, and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his friends, and said: "Take, eat: This is my Body which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

As supper was ending, Jesus took the cup of wine, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said: "Drink this, all of you: This is my blood of the new Covenant, which is poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

*The Celebrant then continues*

We now celebrate, O God, the memorial of Christ our Savior. By means of this holy bread and cup, we show forth the sacrifice of Christ's death, and proclaim the resurrection, until Christ comes in glory. Gather us by this Holy Communion into one body in the Risen One, and make us a living sacrifice of praise. Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, to you be honor, glory, and praise, for ever and ever. **AMEN.**

And now, in the words Christ taught us, we are bold to pray, saying,

*Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name; your kingdom come,  
your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil,  
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.*

#### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

*Eternal and Life-Giving God, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

#### BLESSING

#### THE PEACE