

Christ

in the strangest places:
Foreshadowed, Fulfilled, Forever



“ENLIST”



LENT

Pastor Bernard Ross, Trinity Lutheran-Alma

ABOUT “CHRIST IN THE STRANGEST PLACES”

Two tablets of stone, a few vessels of oil, simple markings, a small army, a remote field, a solemn oath--these are some of the strangest people, places and things through which God revealed himself to his people in the Old Testament. The Old Testament is chock-full of passion themes, from the serpent being crushed in Genesis 3:15 to Isaiah's Fourth Servant Song. Yet this series looks at some of the lesser-known Old Testament passion themes and focuses on them by means of single words.

Pre-Service Music

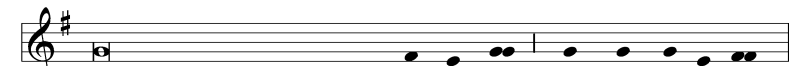
(Please use this time for prayerful listening and preparation. Prayers can be found on the inside cover of the hymnal and on pages 305-318).

Welcome

Silent Prayer

Compline

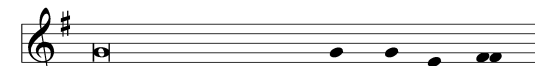
Stand



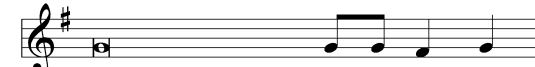
L The Lord Almighty grant us a qui - et night and peace at the last.



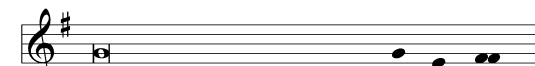
C A - men.



L It is good to give thanks to the Lord,



C to sing praise to Your name, O Most High;



L to herald Your love in the morn - ing,



C Your truth at the close of the day.

Confession

- L** Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence for self-examination.

- L** Holy and gracious God,
C **I confess that I have sinned against You this day. Some of my sin I know—the thoughts and words and deeds of which I am ashamed—but some is known only to You. In the name of Jesus Christ I ask forgiveness. Deliver and restore me that I may rest in peace.**
L By the mercy of God we are redeemed by Jesus Christ, and in Him we are forgiven. We rest now in His peace and rise in the morning to serve Him.
C **Amen.**

Psalmody

Psalm 119:129-135 (*spoken in unison*)

Your testimonies are wonderful;
 therefore my soul keeps them.
 The unfolding of your words gives light;
 it imparts understanding to the simple.
 I open my mouth and pant,
 because I long for your commandments.
 Turn to me and be gracious to me,
 as is your way with those who love your name.
 Keep steady my steps according to your promise,
 and let no iniquity get dominion over me.
 Redeem me from man's oppression,
 that I may keep your precepts.
 Make your face shine upon your servant,
 and teach me your statutes.

Office Hymn #LSB 828

We Are Called to Stand Together



1 We are called to stand to- geth - er With the saints of
 2 Those whom Je - sus called a - pos - tles Jour - neyed with Him
 3 Through the in - ter - ven - ing a - ges Round the world the
 4 Now in man - y tongues and cul - tures Songs of cel - e -
 5 To each com - ing gen - er - a - tion Tell the truth, per -



a - ges past, With the pa - tri - archs and proph - ets
 side by side, Heard His teach - ing, felt His pow - er,
 Gos - pel spread: Faith - ful her - alds took the mes - sage,
 bra - tion ring; Mil - lions who con - fess our Sav - ior
 suade, ex - plain, Till the time when time is end - ed,



In the faith they once held fast; Prom - is - es and
 Saw the way He lived and died; Then the news of
 Guid - ed where the Spir - it led; So the bod - y
 Hon - or Him as Lord and King And, for cour - age,
 Till the Sav - ior comes a - gain— Till the saints are



hopes they trea - sured Now we find ful - filled at last!
 res - ur - rec - tion They de - liv - ered far and wide.
 grew in stat - ure, Serv - ing Christ, the liv - ing head.
 grace and guid - ance Ev - 'ry day their prayers they bring,
 all u - nit - ed Un - der Christ's e - ter - nal reign!

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Readings

Old Testament Reading: Judges 6:7-16; 7:19-22

When the Israelites cried to the LORD because of Midian, he sent them a prophet, who said, “This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: I brought you up out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. I snatched you from the power of Egypt and from the hand of all your oppressors. I drove them from before you and gave you their land. I said to you, ‘I am the LORD your God; do not worship the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you live.’ But you have not listened to me.”

The angel of the LORD came and sat down under the oak in Ophrah that belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, where his son Gideon was threshing wheat in a winepress to keep it from the Midianites. When the angel of the LORD appeared to Gideon, he said, “The LORD is with you, mighty warrior.” “But sir,” Gideon replied, “if the LORD is with us, why has all this happened to us? Where are all his wonders that our fathers told us about when they said, ‘Did not the LORD bring us up out of Egypt?’ But now the LORD has abandoned us and put us into the hand of Midian.” The LORD turned to him and said, “Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian’s hand. Am I not sending you?” “But Lord,” Gideon asked, “how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family.” The LORD answered, “I will be with you, and you will strike down all the Midianites together.”

[...]

Gideon and the hundred men with him reached the edge of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, just after they had changed the guard. They blew their trumpets and broke the jars that were in their hands. The three companies blew the trumpets and smashed the jars. Grasping the torches in their left hands and holding in their right hands the trumpets they were to blow, they shouted, “A sword for the LORD and for Gideon!” While each man held his position around the camp, all the Midianites ran, crying out as they fled. When the three hundred trumpets sounded, the LORD caused the men throughout the camp to turn on each other with their swords. The army fled to Beth Shittah toward Zererah as far as the border of Abel Meholah near Tabbath.

Epistle Reading: Galatians 5:16-25

So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law. The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires.

Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.

Stand

Holy Gospel: Luke 11:33-36

“No one lights a lamp and puts it in a place where it will be hidden, or under a bowl. Instead he puts it on its stand, so that those who come in may see the light. Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eyes are good, your whole body also is full of light. But when they are bad, your body also is full of darkness. See to it, then, that the light within you is not darkness. Therefore, if your whole body is full of light, and no part of it dark, it will be completely lighted, as when the light of a lamp shines on you.”


Responsory


L In-to Your hands, O Lord, I com - mend my spir - it.


C In-to Your hands I com - mend my spir - it.


L You have re - deemed me, O Lord, God of truth.


C In-to Your hands I com - mend my spir - it.


L Glory be to the Fa - ther and to the Son and to the Ho-ly Spir-it.


C In-to Your hands I com - mend my spir - it.

Sit

Homily: "Enlist" Pastor Bernard Ross

Hymn for Reflection #LSB 664

Fight the Good Fight



1 Fight the good fight with all your might; Christ is your
2 Run the straight race through God's good grace; Lift up your
3 Cast care a - side, lean on your guide; His bound - less
4 Faint not nor fear, His arms are near; He chang - es



strength, and Christ your right. Lay hold on life, and
eyes, and seek His face. Life with its way be -
mer - cy will pro - vide. Trust, and en - dur - ing
not who holds you dear; On - ly be - lieve, and



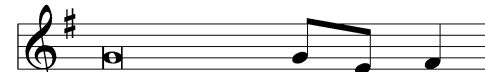
it shall be Your joy and crown e - ter - nal - ly.
fore us lies; Christ is the path, and Christ the prize.
faith shall prove Christ is your life and Christ your love.
you will see That Christ is all e - ter - nal - ly.

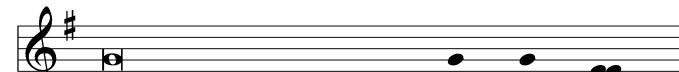
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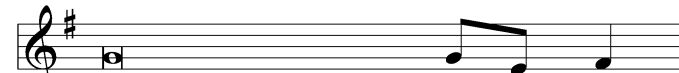
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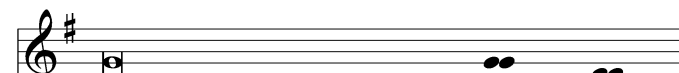
Prayer

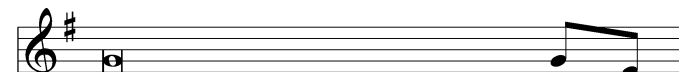

L Hear my prayer, O Lord;


C listen to my cry.


L Keep me as the apple of Your eye;


C hide me in the shadow of Your wings.


L In righteousness I shall see You;


C when I awake, Your presence will give me joy.


C A - men.

Prayer of the Day *(spoken in unison)*

Almighty God, because you know that we of ourselves have no strength, keep us both outwardly and inwardly that we may be defended from all adversities that may happen to the body and from all evil thoughts that may assault and hurt the soul; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Responsive Prayer

P: Our heavenly Father, were it not for your mercies by which you guard, guide, and strengthen us, we would long ago have returned to a life of sin and unbelief. How many and how powerful are our enemies!

C: Satan attacks our faith, trying to crowd you out of our hearts and to sow the seeds of doubt and confusion in our minds by false doctrine. With deadly persistence he strives to turn us from the way of righteousness and lead us down the paths of sin.

P: Father, through the Holy Spirit daily increase our faith in Jesus our Savior.

C: We know by bitter experience that the world is no friend to bring us closer to you. It continually beckons us with its lustful pleasures, its earthly treasures, and its many false gods.

P: Through the Holy Spirit strengthen our love for Christ, so that the world will not be able to gain control of our hearts and fill us with love for material and sinful things.

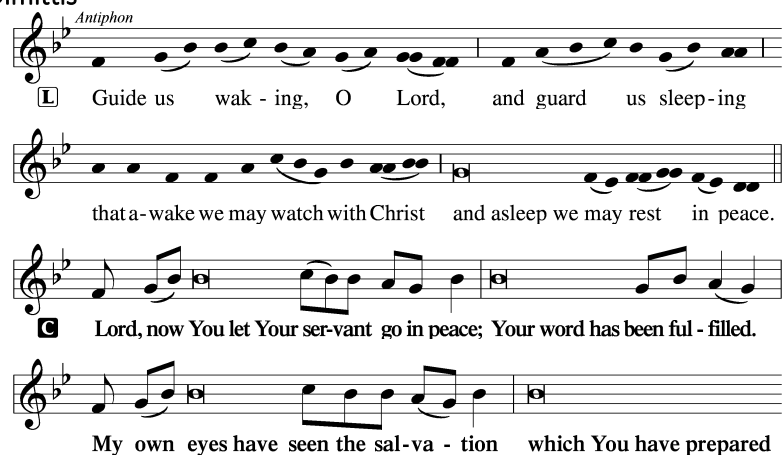
C: Through your Spirit strengthen our faith against all temptations. Direct us to live our lives to you.

P: We must confess that we have often lost the battle against temptations, for we have sinned.

C: Pardon our iniquities for the sake of the sufferings and death of your beloved Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Nunc Dimittis



Antiphon

Guide us wak - ing, O Lord, and guard us sleep - ing
that a - wake we may watch with Christ and asleep we may rest in peace.

Lord, now You let Your ser - vant go in peace; Your word has been ful - filled.

My own eyes have seen the sal - va - tion which You have prepared



in the sight of ev - 'ry peo - ple: a light to reveal You to the na - tions
and the glory of Your peo - ple Is - ra - el. Glo - ry be to the
Fa - ther and to the Son and to the Ho - ly Spir - it;
as it was in the be - gin - ning, is now, and will be for -
Antiphon
ev - er. A - men. Guide us wak - ing, O Lord,
and guard us sleep - ing that a - wake we may
watch with Christ and asleep we may rest in peace.

Benediction

Parting Hymn #LSB 837

Lift High the Cross



Refrain

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ pro - claim Till
all the world a - dore His sa - cred name.

1 Come, Chris - tians, fol - low where our Cap - tain trod,
2 Led on their way by this tri - um - phant sign,
3 All new - born sol - diers of the Cru - ci - fied
4 O Lord, once lift - ed on the glo - rious tree,

Refrain

Our king vic - to - rious, Christ, the Son of God.
The hosts of God in con - qu'ring ranks com - bine.
Bear on their brows the seal of Him who died.
As Thou hast prom - ised, draw us all to Thee.

6 So shall our song of triumph ever be:
Praise to the Crucified for victory! Refrain

The Promise of Baptism

He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned (Mark 16:16)

“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” Now you may want to say: I seem to hear, then, that Baptism is also a part of faith. Of course, it is; but Baptism is not a work that we accomplish. It must be associated with faith because God desires that faith should not remain hidden in the heart but rather break out into the open so that it may be recognized and become manifest before the world.

Therefore, He has ordained these outward signs so that everyone can make known and confess his faith, in order that there may be opportunity also to take up the holy cross. For if faith were to remain buried secretly in the heart, people would be quite safe and no obliged to bear the cross or to follow after Christ. For if the worker did not know that we believe, we would not be persecuted.

Second, no one would be helped by us and be brought to faith if we did not openly confess the Gospel and if we had no outward sign by which people could tell who and where Christians are. But now God has decreed that our faith should be manifest before the unbelievers; therefore, anyone who is now a Christian and has had himself baptized stands in danger that the unbelievers and the non-Christians may lay hold of him and kill him. Therefore, it is necessary that we be baptized, if we are Christian; or if we should not be able to achieve it, we should at least say, I would like to be baptized.

Moreover, the sign has also been given us for this reason that God Himself wants to help us, and that we should be assured of His grace, and that each person should be able to say: God has given me a special token that I may be certain I am saved, as He has promised me through the Gospel. For He has given us the Gospel, which is the charter; and beside the Gospel He has given us Baptism, which is the seal. Thus faith, which lays hold of the Gospel, is fortified by this special token and seal. (*Alone with God: Devotions from Martin Luther; CPH, 1962.*)

*He that believes and is baptized
Shall see the Lord's salvation;
Baptized into the death of Christ,
He is a new creation.
Through Christ's redemption he shall stand
Among the glorious heavenly hand
Of every tribe and Nation*