

## Order of Worship for March 13, 2022

### Prelude

P: The Lord be with you,

**C: and also with you.**

**Opening Hymn: “Sing, My Tongue, the Glorious Battle”- Hymn #454**

### Service of the Word

#### Entrance Psalm:

P: Answer me when I call,

**C: O God of my righteousness!**

P: You have given me relief when I was in distress.

**C: Be gracious to me and hear my prayer!**

P: O men, how long shall my honor be turned into shame?

**C: How long will you love vain words and seek after lies?**

P: But know that the LORD has set apart the godly for Himself;

**C: the LORD hears when I call to Him.**

P: Be angry, and do not sin;

**C: ponder in your own hearts on your beds, and be silent.**

P: Offer right sacrifices,

**C: and put your trust in the LORD.**

P: There are many who say, “Who will show us some good?”

**C: Lift up the light of Your face upon us, O LORD!”**

P: You have put more joy in my heart

**C: than they have when their grain and wine abound.**

P: In peace I will both lie down and sleep;

**C: for You alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety.**

**All: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

P: Answer me when I call,

**C: O God of my righteousness!**

P: You have given me relief when I was in distress.

**C: Be gracious to me and hear my prayer!**

P: Let us pray...O God You see that of ourselves we have no strength. By Your mighty power defend us 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.

**C: Amen.**

**Hymn: “Jesus Refuge of the Weary” - Hymn #423**

## **Old Testament Reading: Jeremiah 26:8-15**

R: And when Jeremiah had finished speaking all that the LORD had commanded him to speak to all the people, then the priests and the prophets and all the people laid hold of him, saying, “You shall die! Why have you prophesied in the name of the LORD, saying, ‘This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate, without inhabitant’?” And all the people gathered around Jeremiah in the house of the LORD. When the officials of Judah heard these things, they came up from the king's house to the house of the LORD and took their seat in the entry of the New Gate of the house of the LORD. Then the priests and the prophets said to the officials and to all the people, “This man deserves the sentence of death, because he has prophesied against this city, as you have heard with your own ears.”

Then Jeremiah spoke to all the officials and all the people, saying, “The LORD sent me to prophesy against this house and this city all the words you have heard. Now therefore mend your ways and your deeds, and obey the voice of the LORD your God, and the LORD will relent of the disaster that He has pronounced against you. But as for me, behold, I am in your hands. Do with me as seems good and right to you. Only know for certain that if you put me to death, you will bring innocent blood upon yourselves and upon this city and its inhabitants, for in truth the LORD sent me to you to speak all these words in your ears.”

R: This is the Word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

## **Holy Gospel – Luke 13:31-35**

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 13th chapter.

**C: Glory to You, O Lord.**

P: At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to [Jesus], “Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill You.” And He said to them, “Go and tell that fox, ‘Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I finish My course. Nevertheless, I must go on My way today and tomorrow and the day following, for it cannot be that a prophet should perish away from Jerusalem.’ O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! Behold, your house is forsaken. And I tell you, you will not see me until you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!’”

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**C: Praise to You, O Christ.**

## **Children’s Message:**

**Sermon Hymn: “My Song Is Love Unknown” – Hymn #430**

**Sermon: “33 AD” - Luke 13:31-35**

33 A. D.—a man named Tiberius is emperor of Rome. He controls an area from Portugal to Iraq, from England to the Sudan. Though powerful, life hasn’t been easy for him. He grew up in a dysfunctional family. How’s this for a soap opera? His father was fleet captain for Julius Caesar and his mother was the beautiful Livia. When Augustus became emperor after Caesar, he forced Tiberius’s father to divorce Livia so she could become Augustus’ third wife. Tiberius

and his brother Drusus came to become a part of Augustus' household. Tiberius married Vispania. Augustus' daughter, Julia, lost her husband. Augustus forced Tiberius to divorce Vispania and married Julia, who was the Paris Hilton of her day. Grieved by the loss of Vispania, Tiberius went off to fight successfully with the Roman army. Only after Augustus exiled Julia did Tiberius return to Rome. He was adopted by Augustus. Since Augustus' three other choices to succeed him had died, Tiberius took over at age 56 when Augustus died.

Overwhelmed by the administration of a vast empire, Tiberius left Rome for the resort island of Capri. He had a beautiful palace, the Villa Jovis, built on a 900 foot cliff from which he could see a magnificent view of the mainland. The island could only be approached by one small beach. He turned over most of the administration of the empire to Sejanus. Sejanus gradually wielded more and more power while Tiberius was isolated. He arranged to poison Tiberius' son Drusus and seduced Drusus' wife, Livilla. Tiberius found out about this and cleverly unseated Sejanus by giving him a long speech to read to the Senate. At first the speech praised Sejanus then ended up condemning him. He was executed. Chaos spread over the empire as Tiberius scurried to regain control. Anyone having anything to do with Sejanus was suspect.

That included a man hundreds of miles to the east in the town called Caesarea in Palestine. His name is Pontius Pilate. He is the Roman governor of Palestine. But he has ruled awkwardly. He is suspected because he served in the army under Sejanus. In his efforts to flatter Tiberius, he has made mistakes. He placed Roman military images in honor of Tiberius in Jerusalem. This is an affront to Jews as our pictures of humans are an affront to traditional Moslems. Thinking he has learned his lesson, Pilate places shields with no images, but with inscriptions to Tiberius with religious associations, in Jerusalem. But this also gets him into trouble. Tiberius finds out. Pilate is this close to losing his position and honor.

How did Tiberius find out about this? North of where Pilate lives on the west side of the Sea of Galilee lives Antipas, the ruler of Galilee and Perea. His father, Herod, had ruled all of Palestine. But he only is a tetrarch, in charge of only  $\frac{1}{4}$  of his father's kingdom. What he lacks in real power, he tries to make up for in cleverness. He keeps up secret communication with Tiberius, hoping to get Pilate in even greater trouble so he might get control of all of Palestine.

South of Galilee is the city of Jerusalem. Joseph Caiaphas the high priest lives here. He is high priest by appointment by the Roman governor. But with Pilate on thin ice with Tiberius, he sees that he has the opportunity to increase his power.

Back near the Sea of Galilee another man is on his way to Jerusalem. He has no plan to gain power or to plot against anyone. Some people come to him and tell him that Antipas wants to kill him. He replies, "Go tell that fox, 'I will drive out demons and heal people today and tomorrow, and on the third day I will reach my goal.' In any case, I must keep going today and tomorrow and the next day—for surely no prophet can die outside Jerusalem."

Tiberius sees his destiny as restoring power to his family so that he could leave his empire to his nephew Caligula. Pilate sees his destiny as restoring his honor with Tiberius and getting to a better post than Palestine. Antipas sees his destiny in restoring the throne of his father, Herod. Caiaphas sees his destiny in being the voice, not the Roman governor, in what happens in Jerusalem. But one man seems to come into the middle of all of this. It is that man from Galilee, the man, Jesus.

Jesus seems to menace Antipas. Antipas has thoughts that Jesus could be his old nemesis, John the Baptist, come back to life. John had confronted Antipas about the evil of marrying his brother's wife, Herodius. Caiaphas will also see Jesus as a threat when Jesus comes to Jerusalem and gets the Passover crowd excited. Jerusalem, a crowded city of 80,000, swells to accommodate up to a million pilgrims each year during Passover. So many of these pilgrims will hail Jesus as God's King who has come to rescue them from Rome. But if this happens, then the Romans will come without asking any questions and wipe out Jerusalem. Pilate doesn't have anything against Jesus; but if there is any kind of uprising in Palestine, he will be blamed. Rome is always quick to quell any revolt against its authority; but war is expensive, like it was in Iraq and Afghanistan. Good governors are expected to find peaceful solutions. If Jesus' death means keeping the peace, Pilate will let that happen. Tiberius is busy enough undoing the mess made by Sejanus. He won't shed any tears if an obscure teacher in Palestine is crucified.

Jesus heads for Jerusalem. He knows all those events facing Tiberius, Pilate, Antipas, and Caiaphas will meet with Him. But He has a destiny beyond all of them. While Caiaphas thinks that Jesus' death will keep power with the high priest and his family, he doesn't know that in less than 40 years Jerusalem will be destroyed by the Romans and the temple and priesthood done away with. While Antipas plots to gain more power, he doesn't know that he will be replaced by his nephew, Agrippa. Pilate may think he has gained peace, but he is remembered by millions as the man under whom Jesus died. Tiberius thinks he has established his empire, but he will give it to Caligula who will set an all-time standard for debauchery only rivaled by Nero. Jesus' destiny is the cross. But by that cross Jesus meets head-on with all evil, pain, corruption, and suffering in this world. He dies with it so that your sin and my sin can be put on that cross with Him.

And that brings us to another character in this story—you and me. What is our destiny? Is it to seek power as Caiaphas did? Is it to connive to have things our way like Antipas? Is it to flatter and negotiate our way through life as Pilate did so that we don't get into trouble? Is it to find peace in our lives as Tiberius tried to by shutting ourselves into our own "Capris" in our climate-controlled, electronically-entertained houses? Because if we see that as our destiny, then all we will end up with is death. We will be like Jerusalem about which Jesus said, "Look, your house is left to you desolate." That is our destiny unless we look to Jesus' destiny—what took Him to the cross for us.

The old spiritual says, "Were you there when they crucified my Lord?" Indeed we were. 33 A.D. was not just something for the history books. Jesus' history - His story - became my story, your story through baptism. Paul says we were buried with Jesus through baptism. In

Colossians he says, “We have died, and our life is hidden with Christ in God the Father.” Our destiny is with Jesus. Where He goes we follow. As He died, so our sins, our old self died with Him on that cross. As He was rejected, we will too as we live for Him. We won’t always “fit in” because we care for those neglected by society. We have a message people often don’t want to hear. And we still go where He has gone before us in His resurrection. We live, not bide our time and make the most of what we can do before we die. No, we live empowered by the certain hope that He is coming again to destroy evil.

### **Epistle Reading: Philippians 3:17-4:1**

R: Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like His glorious body, by the power that enables Him even to subject all things to Himself. Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved.

R: This is the Word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

### **Responses on Our Citizenship in Heaven**

P: “But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,  
**C: who will transform our lowly body to be like His glorious body, by the power that enables Him even to subject all things to Himself.”** (Philippians 3:20-21)

P: “Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul.” (Peter 2:11)

**C: “However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”** (Luke 10:20)

P: “As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance.” (1 Peter 1:14)

**C: “So that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”** (Luke 22:30)

P: “What I mean, brothers and sisters, is that the time is short. From now on those who have wives should live as if they do not; those who mourn, as if they did not; those who are happy, as if they were not; those who buy something, as if it were not theirs to keep; those who use the things of the world, as if not engrossed in them. For this world in its present form is passing away.” (1 Corinthians 7:29-31)

**C: “I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it.”** (John 17:14-16)

P: “Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed.” (1 Corinthians 1:7)

**C: “For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed.”**  
(Romans 8:19)

**All: “For they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.”**  
(1 Thessalonians 1:9-10)

P: (other prayers)

P: Lord, keep this nation under Your care, Bless the leaders of our land that we may be a people at peace among ourselves and a blessing to other nations of the earth. Grant that we may choose trustworthy leaders, contribute to wise decisions for the general welfare, and serve You faithfully in our generation.

**C: We pray also for our true nation, the Church. We humbly ask You to cast bright beams of Your light upon Your Church that we, being instructed by the teachings of the blessed apostles, may walk in the light of Your truth and finally attain to the light of everlasting life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

**Confessing Our Sin and Receiving God’s Forgiveness**  
(based on Philippians 3:17-4:1)

P: Lord Jesus, so often we walk as enemies of the cross of Your cross.

**C: Our end is destruction, our god is our belly, and our glory in our shame with minds set on earthly things.**

P: Forgive us (silence for a moment).

**C: Transform our lowly body to be like Your glorious body, by the power that enables You even to subject all things to Yourself.**

P: By the power of our Lord Jesus Christ which He has given to His Church, the citizens of heaven, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father, and of Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Stand firm thus in the Lord.

**C: Amen.**

**Closing Prayer:**

P: Heavenly Father, it is Your glory always to have mercy. Bring back all who have erred and strayed from Your ways; lead them again to embrace in faith the truth of Your Word and to hold it fast; through Your Son, Christ Jesus.

**C: Amen.**

**Blessing:** (Pastor)

**C: Amen.**

**Closing Hymn: “God Moves in a Mysterious Way” - Hymn #765**

**Postlude**