

Order of Worship for November 20, 2022

Prelude

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

Opening Hymn: “Christ is Surely Coming” – Hymn #509

Confession and Absolution p. 203

Service of the Word

Introit

P: Let all the earth fear the LORD;

C: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him!

P: Come, bless the LORD, all you servants of the LORD,

C: who stand by night in the house of the LORD!

P: Lift up your hands to the holy place

C: and bless the LORD!

P: May the LORD bless you from Zion,

C: He who made heaven and earth!

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: Let all the earth fear the LORD;

C: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him!

Kyrie (“Lord, Have Mercy”) p. 204

Hymn of Praise: (Gloria in Excelsis) p. 204

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us pray.....Lord Jesus Christ, You reign among us by the preaching of Your cross. Forgive Your people their offenses that we, being governed by Your bountiful goodness, may enter at last into Your eternal paradise; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen

Old Testament Reading – Malachi 3:13-18

R: “Your words have been hard against Me, says the LORD. But you say, ‘How have we spoken against You?’ You have said, ‘It is vain to serve God. What is the profit of our keeping His charge or of walking as in mourning before the LORD of hosts? And now we call the arrogant blessed. Evildoers not only prosper but they put God to the test and they escape.’”

Then those who feared the LORD spoke with one another. The LORD paid attention and

heard them, and a book of remembrance was written before Him of those who feared the LORD and esteemed His name. “They shall be Mine, says the LORD of hosts, in the day when I make up My treasured possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his son who serves him. Then once more you shall see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve Him.”

R: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Epistle Reading – Colossians 1:13-20

R: [God the Father] has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. And He is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything He might be preeminent. For in Him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of His cross.

R: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Alleluia and Verse p. 205

Holy Gospel – Luke 23:27-43

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 23rd chapter.

C: Glory to You, O Lord.

P: And there followed [Jesus] a great multitude of the people and of women who were mourning and lamenting for Him. But turning to them Jesus said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For behold, the days are coming when they will say, ‘Blessed are the barren and the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed!’ Then they will begin to say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us,’ and to the hills, ‘Cover us.’ For if they do these things when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?”

Two others, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with Him. And when they came to the place that is called The Skull, there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on His right and one on His left. And Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” And they cast lots to divide His garments. And the people stood by, watching, but the rulers scoffed at Him, saying, “He saved others; let Him save Himself, if He is the Christ of God, His Chosen One!” The soldiers also mocked Him, coming up and offering Him sour wine and saying, “If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself!” There was also an inscription over Him, “This is the King of the Jews.”

One of the criminals who were hanged railed at Him, saying, “Are you not the Christ? Save Yourself and us!” But the other rebuked Him, saying, “Do you not fear God, since you are

under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong.” And he said, “Jesus, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.” And Jesus said to him, “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in paradise.”

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C. Praise to You, O Christ.

Nicene Creed p. 206 (or inside back cover of hymnal)

Sermon Hymn: “*Rejoice, the Lord Is King*” **Hymn #179 LW**
(the powerpoint is found with “other hymns”)

Sermon: “*What Kind of King Is This?*” - **Luke 23:27-43**

Don't you hate waiting in a line only to have a new one open up and people who just got to the end of your line get to go to the head of that new line? Or it always bothers me when I go to an office and am talking to a receptionist after waiting for some time and having the phone ring. Now I have taken the effort to physically go to that office and wait for my turn, but the receptionist will make me wait even longer while talking to the person who is calling from the comfort of his/her home.

The thief on the cross was hardly someone who had been waiting in line. We think of the crowds who gathered to hear Jesus. Remember when Jesus had to go into a boat out away from the shore of the Sea of Galilee because of the people crowding around Him. Then there was the house in Capernaum so crowded with people that the friends of the paralyzed man had to carry him with his cot onto the roof of the house and lower the cot to Jesus. On Palm Sunday the crowds packed around Jesus as He entered Jerusalem. Many of those people in that crowd had followed Jesus for years. But certainly not this thief. He had no such connection with Jesus until he happened to be nailed to a cross on the same day and place of Jesus' crucifixion. Yet this man gets to talk to Jesus for just enough time for Jesus to say to him, “Today you will be with Me in paradise.” Talk about the ultimate of stepping into the right line!

We are called to come to church, to give of our time and talents. The Ten Commandments are a guide for how we should live with God and others. But in the end, isn't all that matters is that we turn to Jesus like the thief on the cross and say, “Lord, remember me when You come into Your Kingdom?”

Just think of all the work and effort, all the guilt, and all the struggle to stay awake during church we could avoid if like the thief we just to Jesus at the last moment. Think of all the “fun” we could have as long as we made that final “dash to the finish line.”

In the story Jesus tells of the Prodigal Son, a son goes out and lives a raucous life. He does come back to the grace of his father, but what is his life like before he returns home? He lives at first for himself, living it up. Then he runs out of money and ends up finding only a job feeding pigs. It was like one of Mike Rowe's “Dirty Jobs” only he hardly got paid and even the

slop fed to the pigs looked good to him. Yes, this son returned to his father at the end, but do you think he had “fun” while he was away? Or don’t you think he wished he had never left home?

The thief was even worse off. He probably never had a loving father to start with. Often people were driven to crime by poverty and abuse from others. He probably had been caught before and punished by whipping and jail time. Now he was experiencing one of the most excruciating forms of execution known to man—crucifixion. Sure, he received before death that wonderful promise of Jesus. But up until then, what did he have?

We may not be in paradise yet. We may feel like we’re standing in line. But what makes paradise “paradise”? If I am a Moslem I am told that paradise is a lovely garden where I have all the beautiful virgins I want. If that’s paradise, then we’re not there. Nor will we ever get there. Jesus’ promise to that thief was, “Today you will be with Me in paradise.” It would be paradise for that man because this man who had no relationship up until this point with Jesus had the promise that he would always have Jesus with him. Not too many moments earlier he had been mocking Jesus with the other criminal. Then his heart was turned. Pastor Dave taught me in one of our meetings with other local pastors that when Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they don’t know what they are doing,” He didn’t just say this once, but continually. The thief heard this. He saw Jesus. But he couldn’t touch Jesus. Yet Jesus’ promise was, “Don’t worry. You will be with Me. There will be no nails and a cross to separate us. You will be in My loving arms.”

Unlike that thief we don’t have to wait until death to touch Jesus. He is already with us. He touches us through the waters of Baptism. He touches us as our lips meet His cup. He holds us as we are held by His loving people. We don’t have to wait.

It is not like we are just waiting in line or trying to keep from being bored until Jesus comes. No, right now we can be living in a joyful relationship with Jesus. Is going to church a chore? Is following God’s commands a burden? Is it torture to help others? It can be if we do those things to get in line first and try to be better for God. But when those are who we are as God’s people, then that’s what we want to do. David said in the Psalms, “Better to be a servant in the Lord’s house than a king elsewhere.” The Prodigal Son, the thief on the cross, all of those who have lived apart from Jesus would agree with that.

My mom’s Uncle Mike died in the nursing home at age 96. Mike had wanted to go for a long time. He was a gentle man who served in the army in Europe during World War II, lost his wife back in 1968, and faithfully helped in the church. Just days before he died, his great-great nephew came by to visit and told him, “Uncle Mike, don’t worry. You know my great grandpa (Mike’s brother Herman) and Uncle Henry (Mike’s oldest brother) are up in heaven. They’re trying to decide what color to paint your bedroom in heaven.”

We know that we will rise on the last day. But until then what that little boy expressed is the joy we have because we are the Lord’s. Unlike that thief we don’t have to wait until after

death to be with the Lord. He is with us right now. That's why we go to church, help others, live according to God's laws, and give of ourselves. We do that because Jesus is here, and He will be with us in paradise.

Prayer of the Church

P: Lord in Your mercy...

C: hear our prayer.

Sharing Our Ministry

Offering and Voluntary

Service of the Sacrament

Preface: p. 208

P: It is truly good, right, and proper that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, Almighty God, heavenly Father, for You sent Jesus into this world die with our sins on the cross. Then You raised Him from the dead so He could ascend to Your right hand. From there He has promised to come again. We await Him with joy. Therefore with angels and all the army of heaven we praise and make great Your holy Name, evermore praising You and singing . . .

Sanctus (*Holy, Holy, Holy*) p. 208

Prayer of Thanksgiving:

P: We praise You Lord God King of the Universe for You will not let sin and evil go on, but Jesus will come again to judge the living and the dead. Until we wait for Him to come by coming to the meal He offers to us of His true body and blood. Send us Your Holy Spirit so that we approach His table in faith believing that He gives us in, with, and under the bread and wine His true body and blood for the forgiveness of sins. Hear us as we pray the words Jesus taught us to pray . . .

Lord's Prayer p. 209

The Words of Our Lord, Pax Domini (*Peace of the Lord*) p. 209

Agnus Dei (*Lamb of God*) p. 210

Distribution of Holy Communion

"The Bridegroom Soon Will Call Us" – **Hymn #514**

"Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying" – **Hymn #516**

Nunc Dimittis (*Now Let Us Depart*) p. 211

Prayer after Communion:

P: Almighty and everlasting God, Whose will it is to restore all things to Your beloved Son, Whom You anointed priest and king forever: Grant that all the people of the earth, now divided by the power of sin, may be united under the glorious rule of Your Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ Who lives and rules with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Benedicamus and Blessing p. 212

Closing Hymn: “Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers” – Hymn #515

Postlude