

Order of Worship for November 17, 2024

Prelude

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

Opening Hymn: *“Hail, Thou Once Despised Jesus”* - Hymn #531

Confession and Absolution p. 203

Service of the Word

Entrance Psalm

P: The one who endures to the end

C: will be saved.

P: Let Mount Zion be glad!

C: Let the daughters of Judah rejoice because of Your judgments!

P: Walk about Zion, go around her, number her towers,

C: consider well her ramparts, go through her citadels.

P: That you may tell the next generation that this is God, our God forever and ever.

C: He will guide us forever.

**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: The One who endures to the end

C: will be saved.

Kyrie (“Lord, Have Mercy”) p. 204

Hymn of Praise: *“Gloria in Excelsis” (Glory to God in the Highest)* p. 204

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us pray... O Lord, by Your bountiful goodness release us from the bonds of our sins, which by reason of our weakness we have brought upon ourselves, that we may stand firm until the day of our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever

C: Amen.

Old Testament Reading— Daniel 12:1-3

R: At that time shall arise Michael, the great prince who has charge of your people. And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation till that time. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone whose name shall be found written in the book. And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting

life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.

R: This is the Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God

Epistle—Hebrews 13:1-19

R: Let brotherly love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated, since you also are in the body. Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous. Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for He has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." So we can confidently say,

"The Lord is my helper;

I will not fear;
what can man do to me?"

Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. Do not be led away by diverse and strange teachings, for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, which have not benefited those devoted to them. We have an altar from which those who serve the tent have no right to eat. For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy places by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin are burned outside the camp. So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through His own blood. Therefore let us go to Him outside the camp and bear the reproach He endured. For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come. Through Him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge His name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a clear conscience, desiring to act honorably in all things. I urge you the more earnestly to do this in order that I may be restored to you the sooner.

R: This is the Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God.

Alleluia and Verse p. 205

Holy Gospel—Mark 13:1-13

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the thirteenth chapter

C: Glory to You, O Lord.

P: And as [Jesus] came out of the temple, one of His disciples said to Him, “Look, Teacher, what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!” And Jesus said to him, “Do you see these great buildings? There will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down.” And as He sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked Him privately, “Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when all these things are about to be accomplished?” And Jesus began to say to them, “See that no one leads you astray. Many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am He!’ and they will lead many astray. And when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed. This must take place, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. These are but the beginning of the birth pains. But be on your guard. For they will deliver you over to councils, and you will be beaten in synagogues, and you will stand before governors and kings for My sake, to bear witness before them. And the gospel must first be proclaimed to all nations. And when they bring you to trial and deliver you over, do not be anxious beforehand what you are to say, but say whatever is given you in that hour, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit. And brother will deliver brother over to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death. And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord

C: Praise to You, O Christ.

Creed: 3rd Article and Explanation pg. 323

Sermon Hymn: “*How Firm a Foundation*” – **Hymn #728**

Sermon: “*Enduring To The End*” – **Hebrews 13**

One of the most impressive stories from the Olympics is about a runner from Tanzania—John Stephen Akhwari—who competed in the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City. He competed in the marathon, but he faced challenges he wasn’t prepared for. The race started at the hottest part of the day, and he’d been unable to train at the altitude he had to run in. He was knocked down as runners jockeyed for position, and hurt his knee and shoulder so badly officials begged him to stop, but he wouldn’t. When John was asked why he didn’t drop out of the race, his answer said it all: “My country did not send me to Mexico City to start the race; they sent me five thousand miles to finish the race.” Can you imagine? John’s story went down in Olympic history and was dubbed “The Greatest Last Place Finish Ever.”

I’m not a runner, but I’m told by those who are that it’s not the physical training and preparations that are the hardest part. It’s the mental part. Physical training makes your body able to endure the rigors of the race. But it’s the mental part, knowing that you can do it, is the hardest part. It’s the part that makes it able to endure.

How can we do that? “People need a powerful why if they are going to be able to endure any how,” wrote New York Times columnist David Brooks, echoing the words of Nietzsche, that were made famous by Viktor Frankl, psychologist and Holocaust survivor who wrote Man’s

Search for Meaning. If we are to endure, the question isn't how we endure. The question is why we should endure.

Endurance is "the ability to withstand hardship or adversity." It's the capacity and power to bear up under difficult circumstances. It's a hopeful fortitude that perseveres to the end. It is a quality built by remaining under pressure, something our natural inclination wants to drift away from. And we need a why to be able to endure. We can endure much more when there is both perspective (a great view) and progress (actually going somewhere).

If you had to do a ten-mile hike, would you rather do it outside going up a mountain trail or inside on a treadmill set at a steep incline? Most would opt, even if it was much harder, for the mountain trail. Why? Because we can endure much more when there is both perspective (a great view) and progress (actually going somewhere).

That's what we see here in the concluding chapter of Hebrews, chapter 13. It reminds us of the importance of enduring to the end. It also gives us practical advice for how to endure to the end. We get practices and perspective to keep us going. This is the chapter that declares, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (v. 8), and that is a reminder we need to hear in a world full of change. But we also need to hear the chapter's many instructions for the Christian life under pressure, instructions on how to endure.

First and foremost, let brotherly love continue. Or as another translation puts it, "Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters" (v. 1). Endurance happens in community, and love is what keeps us together. Jonathan Haidt's book *The Anxious Generation* has gained importance for the way that it connects the high anxiety of people today, especially younger people, to the use of smartphones and social media. But the book traces the problem back even earlier, to the loss of community that began in the 1960's. Without community, it's easier to be anxious. It's harder to endure.

The next verses continue to remind the Hebrews of the importance of community, as they're reminded to show hospitality and visit those in prison. Honor marriage. Reject sexual immorality and love of money, two of their culture's greatest idols, and it is true of ours as well. Beyond that, remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God to you, and avoid "all kinds of strange teachings". Do good, share what you have, obey your leaders, pray for others.

Why should we do these things? Author Dorothy Bass writes, "Christian practices are things Christian people do together over time in response to and in the light of God's active presence for the life of the world in Christ Jesus." There is a connection between individual spiritual disciplines (e.g., fasting, prayer, Bible reading, and tithing) and practices as "clusters" of activities (such as worship, community, hospitality, and formation that are made up of individual disciplines) that endure over time to form characteristics in the life of a Christian (such as humility, generosity, kindness, and godliness). Like training for a marathon, these practices help us to get in shape for the long marathon of life. Individual spiritual disciplines help, but most Christian practices need other Christians around.

Every Christian needs the encouragement of every other Christian. Everyone who comes through the door of a place of worship is a real encouragement to everyone else who is there. This is part of the way, along with an actual word of encouragement when necessary, in which we can ‘stir one another up’ to work hard at the central actions of Christian living, ‘love and good works. And we need this encouragement all the more as we believe that we are drawing closer to the great day when, with Jesus’ reappearance, God will complete his work of new creation.

Endurance. It’s what you and I both need to keep moving forward in this life. Against all odds. Against all opposition. Against all setbacks, disappointments, and disillusionments. When nothing turns out like we expect. When, despite all the pain, we need to get back up and keep running our race. It’s what we’ll need to finish all that we start.

There’s a reason stories of endurance continue to be popular. Homer’s epic struggle to return home in *The Odyssey* is still required reading thousands of years after it was first told. John Bunyan’s allegory of Christian’s journey to the celestial city in *The Pilgrim’s Progress* has appeared in 200 languages and has never gone out of print. Peter Jackson has brought almost a billion visitors to Middle Earth to follow Frodo and Samwise Gamgee’s mission to destroy the ring of power, and Tolkien’s books continue to be bestsellers. We continue to find inspiration in Anne Frank’s hiding place in Amsterdam and Louie Zamperini’s unbroken determination in Japanese prison camps.

There’s two meanings to the word endure. The first has to do with being patient or resilient, exercising perseverance, showing determination and resolve. In this sense, endure is most often used to describe something that people are forced to do (or not). The second sense has to do with permanence, stability, and dependability. In that case, endure isn’t something someone does. It’s something or someone else, but it’s something that makes it easier for people to endure.

We can endure because of what Jesus endured for us on the cross. We can endure because of what Jesus endured for us outside the gate, going into the unclean places to make us clean. We can endure because Jesus endures, is always the same yesterday today and forever. We can endure because we are not alone. We can endure “because God has said, ‘Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you’” That is why we can “say with confidence, ‘The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?’” That is why we know that even though “here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come” (v. 14).

There is much for us to endure this time of year. Students, faculty, and staff at Iowa State and in other schools are trying to endure until Thanksgiving break and until the end of the semester. Watching Cyclone teams can require endurance, watching to the end to see if a victory can be pulled from the jaws of defeat. We’ve endured another election and all of the campaigning and negative ads that come along with it, but now we have to endure post-election political

posturing. Winter is coming, and we have to endure the darkness and cold that is coming.

But we can endure whatever hardships come our way. We can endure because we have a why. We can endure because we know what Jesus has done for us. We can endure because we know what we're looking forward to. We have the perspective of where we're going, the heavenly city. We have the perception of progress, knowing we're one day closer to Jesus' return than we were yesterday. We have the promise that we will never be forsaken or left alone. That's why we can endure to the end.

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: It is truly right to give thanks to You, almighty God, heavenly Father, for You sent Your Son Christ Jesus to die outside the city of Jerusalem and face the shame that we deserve for our sins. Therefore we can also go outside the city to face reproach because we follow Him. 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: Blessed are You Lord God, King of all creation for You have sent us those who are examples of faith so that we set our eyes alone on Christ Jesus, who offers us His true body and blood in Holy Communion for the forgiveness of sins. Send Your Holy Spirit so that we trust that Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, today and forever. Hear us we pray in His name . . .

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:

"Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness" – **Hymn #563**

"No Temple Now, No Gift of Price" – **Hymn #530**

Nunc Dimittis (Song of Simeon): p. 211

Prayer after Communion:

P: Christ Jesus, we thank You for this blessed meal. Use it so that we truly believe, "I will never leave you nor forsake you," and that we confidently say, "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?"

C: Amen.

P: Let us bless the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Blessing:

P: Now the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever.

C: Amen.

Closing Hymn: *"Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending"* - **Hymn #336**

Postlude: