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# Last Sunday of the Church Year

November 24, 2019

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**AS WE GATHER:** The people in Malachi's day could not understand how God could allow evildoers to prosper; the disciples on Good Friday could not understand how God could let Jesus be cruelly executed. Even today we wonder about the world's state of affairs. As we struggle with evil running rampant around us, we place our trust in what God did when Jesus went to the cross and died. By Jesus' death, our sins are forgiven and paradise is open to us. As we close out the church year today, we take to heart that "soon and very soon, we are going to see the King!"

## WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### OPENING BLESSING

*Psalm 46*

L: In the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen!**

L: God is our refuge and strength,

**C: A very present help in trouble.**

L: Therefore, we will not fear though the earth gives way,

**C: though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea,**

L: though its waters roar and foam,

**C: though the mountains tremble at its swelling.**

L: The Lord of hosts is with us;

**C: The God of Jacob is our fortress.**

### **ADMITTING OUR FAULTS**

L: Beloved in the Lord, sheep of the Good Shepherd, we know of His abiding goodness and mercy. With confidence, let us come before our Lord to confess our sins and to find the forgiveness we seek.

*Moment of silence*

L: We confess.

**C: Almighty God, we admit our sinfulness, both that which is within us from the beginning and that which continues to occur in our lives. Forgive us, renew us, and create in us clean hearts so that we may serve You as Your redeemed people, now and forever.**

## **YOU ARE FORGIVEN**

L: God hears our cries for mercy, and because of the sacrifice of His beloved Son for the sins of all people, He grants forgiveness. It is this forgiveness that I announce to you. You are forgiven and have been made new. May you live confidently in this life as you await the joy of life everlasting. Be at peace!

**C: Amen.**

## **SONG OF PRAISE:**

## **“There is A Redeemer”**

There is a Redeemer Jesus God’s own Son;  
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah, Holy One.  
Thank You, O my Father, for giving us Your Son,  
And leaving Your Spirit till the work on earth is done.

Jesus, my Redeemer, name above all names;  
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah, Hope for sinners slain.  
Thank You, O my Father, for giving us Your Son,  
And leaving Your Spirit till the work on earth is done.

When I stand in glory, I will see His face;  
There I’ll serve my King forever in that holy place.  
Thank You, O my Father, for giving us Your Son,  
And leaving Your Spirit till the work on earth is done.

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## **SERVICE OF THE WORD**

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## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

L: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

L: Let us pray together:

**C: Lord Jesus, even from the cross, You reign as King of kings and Lord of lords. Forgive us our sins, and remember us as You come into Your kingdom that, like the repentant thief on the cross, we, too, may be with You in paradise;**

L: for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

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## THE SCRIPTURE LESSONS

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### The First Lesson:

Malachi 3:13-18

*God promises to keep names in His book of remembrance.*

"Your words have been hard against me, says the LORD. But you say, 'How have we spoken against you?' 14 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. Evil doers 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.

### The Gospel Lesson:

Luke 23:27-43

*Jesus promises paradise to the thief on a neighboring cross.*

And there followed him 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 he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

## **CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

### **SERMON HYMN: "Blessed Assurance"**

*TOSB 16*

1. Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!  
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!  
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,  
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.  
This is my story, this is my song,  
Praising my Savior all the day long;  
This is my story, This is my song,  
Praising my Savior all the day long.
2. Perfect submission, perfect delight,  
Visions of rapture now burst on my sight;  
Angels descending bring from above  
Echoes of mercy, whispers of love.  
This is my story, this is my song,  
Praising my Savior all the day long;  
This is my story, This is my song,  
Praising my Savior all the day long.

3. Perfect submission, all is at rest,  
I in my Savior am happy and blest;  
Watching and waiting, looking above,  
Filled with His goodness, lost in His love.  
This is my story, this is my song,  
Praising my Savior all the day long;  
This is my story, This is my song,  
Praising my Savior all the day long.

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## SERMON

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### AFFIRMATION OF OUR FAITH

**C: I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth.  
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.  
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit  
And born of the virgin Mary.  
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
Was crucified, died, and was buried.  
He descended into hell.  
On the third day he rose again.  
He ascended into heaven,  
And is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
The holy Christian Church,  
The communion of saints,  
The forgiveness of sins,  
The resurrection of the body,  
And the life everlasting. Amen.**

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## **OFFERINGS**

*The offerings gathered are a sign of our whole lives offered to God in humble gratitude for his greatest of all offerings, His Son offered for our salvation.*

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## THE PRAYERS OF GOD'S PEOPLE

L: Let us pray for the whole people of God, and for all people according to their needs.

L: This Last Sunday of the Church Year, we come before our heavenly Father in the name of the One who is King of kings, His Son, Jesus. At His invitation we pray. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

L: Almighty God, all in heaven and on earth will bow before Your Son and confess that He is Lord. With his assurance, grant courage to those who face opposition from hostilities to the Gospel. By Your Holy Spirit, strengthen all Christians to bear bold and loving witness to Your Son. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

L: Almighty God, the strength of the weak and the consolation of those who put their trust in You, mercifully accept our prayers on behalf of Your people (especially...) that by Your power their illness and challenges may be turned around. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

L: Almighty God, without Your aid, faith can grow cold, questions about Your love and mercy can arise, and the problems in front of our eyes can seem more real than Your abiding presence. Renew strong faith and urgent love in us and all our brothers and sisters in the faith so that we each hear for ourselves the clear promise of paradise You announced from the cross. Strengthen us for joyful service in Your kingdom. Lord, in Your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

L: Into your hands, O God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C: Amen.**

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

**C: Our Father who art in heaven,**

**Hallowed be Thy name,**

**Thy kingdom come,**

**Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven;**

**Give us this day our daily bread;**

**And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who  
trespass against us;**

**And lead us not into temptation,**

**But deliver us from evil.**

**For Thine is the kingdom and the power and glory forever  
and ever. Amen.**

## REMEMBERING TO GIVE THANKS

L: We will be celebrating Thanksgiving this week. This is a day dedicated to remembering all that God has done for us and thanking Him for His abundant blessings. Though you may have food to cook and relatives to entertain, be sure to take a moment and pause before the Lord, who has provided You with many blessings. As we close out our worship today, we hear from our Peace Lutheran Choir about the importance of thanksgiving and then uplift our hearts in prayerful thanksgiving.

## CHORAL ANTHEM: "Simple Thanksgiving" By Joseph M. Martin

'Tis a gift to be simple, 'tis a gift to be free,  
'tis a gift to come down where we ought to be  
and when we find ourselves in the place just right,  
We'll be in the valley of love and light.

When true simplicity is gained  
to bow and to bend we shan't be ashamed.  
To turn, turn, turn, will be our delight  
'til by turning, turning we come 'round right.

This is my Father's world, and to my list'ning ears,  
all nature sings and 'round me rings the music of the spheres.

This is my Father's world, I rest me in the thought  
of rocks and trees, of skies and seas;  
His hand the wonders wrought.

This is my Father's world, the birds their carols raise;  
*(‘Tis a gift to be simple, ‘tis a gift to be free, ‘tis a gift to come down where  
we ought to be.)*

the morning light, the lily white, declare their Maker's praise.  
*(‘Tis a gift to be simple, ‘tis a gift to declare their Makers praise.)*

This is my Father's world. He shines in all that's fair.

In rustling grass I hear Him pass, He speaks to me ev'rywhere.

In rustling grass I hear Him pass.

In simple things I hear Him sing.

He sings to me ev'rywhere.

### **THANKSGIVING PRAYER**

L: Dear Heavenly Father, You have given us abundant earthly blessings. As we celebrate Thanksgiving this week, we thank You for the food and drink that will be on our tables this day and every day. We pray that You would provide also for all those who do not know from where their next meal is coming. Protect all who are traveling for the holiday, and strengthen those who cannot be with family and friends. Be especially with all those who are lonely and who are struggling to find community. Thank You most of all for the gift of Your Son, Jesus. In His name we pray.

**C: Amen.**

### **CLOSING BLESSING**

L: The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the + Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve you.

**C: Amen.**

### **DISMISSAL**

L: Go in peace! Serve the Lord!

**C: Thanks be to God!**