

Twenty-Second Week of Pentecost



The Lihu'e Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hawai'i

Ka Hale Pule 'O Na Lahui Apau . . .

Church Of All Peoples . . .

. . . Hele Pu Ma'kou me Iesu Kristo

. . . Walking Together With Christ

October 24, 2021

The Lihue Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hawai'i
 4602 Ho'omana Road, Lihue, HI 96766

The Rev. Dr. JP Paxton *Tony Kment, Technology*
Rhonda Pabo, Organist *Noreen Javinar, Lector*

Church: (808) 245-2145 Fax: (808) 246-8626

E-Mail: staff@lihuelutheran.com Website: lihuelutheranchurch.com

Welcome to Our Guests

It is always a joy to share our faith and worship with people visiting from around the world. Please know your presence and participation in our service is most appreciated. At Lihue Lutheran we celebrate Holy Communion at every service. You are certainly welcome in joining us as our Lord comes to us in this holy meal.

Prayer Concerns

Please remember these people in your prayers during the week: The family of Amanda Thayer , Bob & Joann Clash, Sally Rasay, Linda Garrett, Stan Weeks, Ronnie Pacheco, Pagatpatan ohana, Villanueva ohana, Geronimo ohana, David Gragg, Joe Morgan, Zosimo and Virginia Austria, Karen Kinoshita, Jake Whisenhunt, Rick Rentz, Norman Dibble, Kazue Zaima, Virginia Hines-Aflague, John Mattek, Giraldo II (Bobby Giraldo's son), Kristie Schmid (Tony's sister), Lolli Hagen, Abraham Torres, Sr., Kristy Kahananui, Sonny Koerte, Uncle Joe, Mallory Rodriguez, Steve Schantz, Peter Alisna, Tirzah Pope, Pastor Matthew Weber, Joyce Anglemeyer, Stephen Shioi, Peggy Hood, Jason Shimono, Richard Rasay, Nancy Nelson (formely Mandell), Karen & Patrick Pavao, Edward Rasay, Karen Richards (friend of Nancy Mandell), Marcos Larson (Liedeke's son), Dora Jane Rowell, Franklin Parraga, Penny Parraga, Leticia Ancog (Kurt Javinar's sister), Yvonne Shinseki, Al Dressler (Larry's Father), Shirley Hallman (Denese Alcott's Mother), Mercy Ballesteros, Mike LaBerge, Anna Marie & Phil Croghan, Judy Carlson, Caroline Johnson, Sheila Belarmino, Ray Roderick, The Church Council, and leaders in the ELCA. If you have additional prayer requests, please let the church office know. "Ask it in my name . . ." Mahalo for your love.

Remembering Our Military

As we gather for worship, please remember those serving us in the military, and the families of our Hawai'i National Guard. These names have been given by loved ones and family members: Navy – TJ, Javinar, Kristian Matsumoto, Coast Guard - Brian Rodriguez, Navy - Kiana Alisna, Coast Guard - Ke'ale Renta Army - Jason Lumacad, Levi Fajardo: Air Force - Steven Javinar, Ikaika Fajardo, Army - Brandon Perkinson, Drew Cox, Tony Garton: National Guard - Benji MacKenzie, Eddie Resinto, Fred Casticimo, Philip Kamakea, Anthony Y. Torres, Master Sgt. If you know of someone you would like added to our prayer list, please advise the church office.

Lihue Lutheran Spotlight

It is domestic abuse awareness month. If you or someone you know is facing domestic abuse, call YWCA at (808) 245-6362. Hau'oli Lā Hānau to Hailey Iha (10/29). Happy Anniversary to Dave and Laurie Hutchinson (10/25) Mahalo plenty to everyone who came out to help at last week's all church clean up day!



Introduction

Can we pray the way Bartimaeus prays? People try to hush him up because by addressing Jesus as “Son of David” he is making a politically dangerous claim that Jesus is the rightful king. Could our prayers ever be heard as a threat to unjust powers that be? Bartimaeus won’t give up or go away quietly, but repeats his call for help more loudly. Do we ask so boldly? And are our prayers an honest answer to Jesus’ question, “What do you want me to do for you?”

Overview

Sharing in Your Glory: Success or Service?

The word for today is *restoration*. Both the Old Testament reading and the psalm speak of God’s restoration of the people of Israel, gathering them from sorrowful exile into joyful community. The gospel tells the story of Jesus healing Bartimaeus, restoring his sight in response to his faith. Today we do not have the same understanding of “clean” and “unclean” people; however, those who are sick still need restoration. There are people who are hospitalized for extended periods of time who need to be restored to the community. There are folks in nursing homes who long for the connections they once had to a worshipping community. There are people in prison who are cut off. There are even people who have been hurt or disappointed by the church who need restoration.

This same Jesus, the letter to the Hebrews reminds us, is our great high priest who continually restores us to right relationship with God. This hope of restoration is echoed in the reading from Jeremiah. Here God promises to gather and restore the people of Israel from their exile.

This promise of restoration is acted out through worship. Much of what happens in worship is concerned with restoration. In the word, in the meal, in confession and forgiveness, we are restored to wholeness (and *holiness*) with God and with one another. In the sharing of the peace we act out the restoration and reconciliation we all need. In the Lord’s Prayer we ask, “forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.” What is this if not a plea for restoration? This restoration is not through our own merit, but through the love of Christ and the faith we have been given.

Theological Reflection

When Bartimaeus identifies Jesus as “Son of David” (Mark 10:47, 48), it is a statement of faith proclaiming Jesus as the Messiah. This statement has political implications, but it is more than political. David is described as a “man after [God’s] own heart” (1 Sam. 13:14). So too is Jesus, the heir to David’s throne, whose actions toward Bartimaeus reveal to us God’s heart—a heart of mercy and healing. How is knowing that Jesus is a man after God’s own heart good news to you, and to your hearers, this week?

Announcements and Weekly Events!

Welcome, Check-In, and Announcements

In the Facebook chatbox share something good God is doing in your life.

Announcements

- ◇ **Sign up for Trunk-or-Treat** or **Trick-or-Treat** in the Grave Yard! **Saturday, Oct 30**
- ◇ **Operation Christmas Child**—Michelle Dressler

Packing parties

Sunday, October 24 after church in the fellowship hall, \$10 donation

Monday, October 25 with the Ghetto Sweet Tarts

Weekly Events

- ◇ Youth Group
 - Sunday, Oct 24**, Pumpkin Carving in the fellowship hall
- ◇ Ghetto Sweet Tarts (Taco Tuesday, on a Monday!)
 - Monday, Oct 25**, Packing party and pumpkin carving 5:30-7pm in the Fellowship Hall
- ◇ BOBS Bible Study—The Forgotten Luther (6-week study)
 - Tuesday, Oct 26**, @ 5:30-7pm in the fellowship hall
- ◇ Centering Prayer with Liedeke Bulder
 - Saturday, Oct 30**, @ 9-10am via zoom <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/9079773456>

Twenty-Second Week of Pentecost

Order for Worship

*Confession and Forgiveness

P Blessed be the Holy Trinity, ✝ one God, whose teaching is life, whose presence is sure, and whose love is endless.

C Amen.

P Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.
Most merciful God,

Silence is kept for reflection.

P God our comforter:

C like lost sheep, we have gone astray. We gaze upon abundance and see scarcity. We turn our faces away from injustice and oppression. We exploit the earth with our apathy and greed. Free us from our sin, gracious God. Listen when we call out to you for help. Lead us by your love to love our neighbors as our selves. Amen.

P All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. By the gift of grace in ✝ Christ Jesus, God makes you righteous. Receive with glad hearts the forgiveness of all your sins.

C Amen.



*Gathering Song

We Are All On One Mission

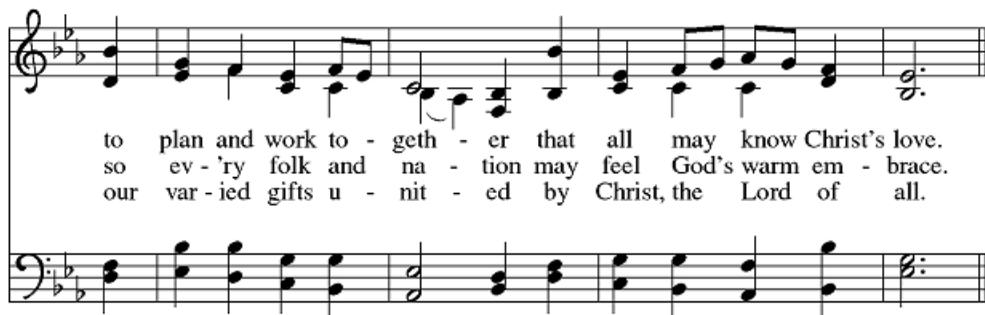
1 We all are one in mis - sion; we all are one in call,
2 We all are called for ser - vice, to wit - ness in God's name.
3 Now let us be u - nit - ed, and let our song be heard.



our var-ied gifts u - nit - ed by Christ, the Lord of all.
Our min - is - tries are dif - f'rent; our pur - pose is the same:
Now let us be a ves - sel for God's re - deem-ing Word.



A sin - gle great com - mis - sion com - pels us from a - bove
to touch the lives of oth - ers with God's sur - pris - ing grace,
We all are one in mis - sion; we all are one in call,



to plan and work to - geth - er that all may know Christ's love.
so ev - 'ry folk and na - tion may feel God's warm em - brace.
our var - ied gifts u - nit - ed by Christ, the Lord of all.

**The Apostolic Greeting*

P The grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

C **And also with you.**

*Kyrie

Refrain

Ky-ri - e e - lei - son, on our world and on our way.

Ky-ri - e e - lei - son, ev-'ry day.

All Sing

For peace in the world, for the health of the church, for the unity of all;
 For this holy house, for all who worship and praise,
 Let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord. (*refrain*)

That we may live out your impassioned response to the hungry and the poor;
 That we may live out . . . truth and justice and grace.
 Let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord. (*refrain*)

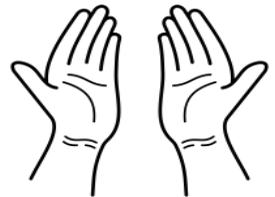
For peace in our hearts . . . For peace in our homes . . . For friends and family.
 For life and for love . . . For our work and our play,
 Let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord. (*refrain*)

For your Spirit to guide, that you center our lives in the water and the word;
 That you nourish our souls . . . With your body and blood,
 Let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord. (*refrain*)

*Prayer of the Day

P Let us pray. Eternal light, shine in our hearts. Eternal wisdom, scatter the darkness of our ignorance. Eternal compassion, have mercy on us. Turn us to seek your face, and enable us to reflect your goodness, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.



First Reading

Jeremiah 31:7-9

This passage speaks not only of the southern kingdom, Judah, and its homecoming from exile in Babylon, but also of the northern kingdom ("Israel" or "Ephraim") and its restoration. The northern tribes of Israel had been lost in exile to Assyria more than a century before Jeremiah prophesied.

⁷Thus says the LORD:

Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob,
and raise shouts for the chief of the nations;
proclaim, give praise, and say,
“Save, O LORD, your people,
the remnant of Israel.”

⁸See, I am going to bring them from the land of
the north,
and gather them from the farthest parts of the
earth,

among them the blind and the lame,
those with child and those in labor, together;
a great company, they shall return here.

⁹With weeping they shall come,
and with consolations I will lead them back,
I will let them walk by brooks of water,
in a straight path in which they shall not
stumble;
for I have become a father to Israel,
and Ephraim is my firstborn.

A The Word of the Lord

C Thanks be to God.

Psalm

Psalm 126

Those who sowed with tears will reap with songs of joy. (*Ps. 126:5*)

¹When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion,
then were we like those who dream.

²**Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and
our tongue with shouts of joy.**

**Then they said among the nations, “The
LORD has done great things for them.”**

³The LORD has done great things for us,
and we are glad indeed.

⁴**Restore our fortunes, O LORD,
like the watercourses of the Negeb.**

⁵Those who sowed with tears
will reap with songs of joy.

⁶**Those who go out weeping, carrying the
seed,
will come again with joy, shouldering
their sheaves.**

Second Reading

Hebrews 7:23-28

Human priests of old offered sacrifice for their own sins and served only until their death. In contrast, Jesus is God’s Son, the holy, sinless, resurrected high priest. Death did not terminate his priestly service, but through his death he has interceded for our sins.

²³The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office; ²⁴but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. ²⁵Consequently he is able for all time to save those who approach God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

²⁶For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, blameless, undefiled, separated

from sinners, and exalted above the heavens.

²⁷Unlike the other high priests, he has no need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for those of the people; this he did once for all when he offered himself. ²⁸For the law appoints as high priests those who are subject to weakness, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever.

A The Word of the Lord

C Thanks be to God.

*Gospel Acclamation



Al - le - lu - ia! Lord and Sav - ior: o - pen now your sav - ing Word.



Let it burn like fire with - in us; speak un - til our hearts are stirred.



Al - le - lu - ia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.

Holy Gospel

Mark 10:46-52

Bartimaeus comes to Jesus with faith, asking that he might see again. Recognizing Jesus' identity, Bartimaeus is the first person to call him "Son of David" in the Gospel of Mark.

P The Holy Gospel according to Saint Mark, the tenth chapter.



Glo - ry to you, O Lord.

⁴⁶As [Jesus] and his disciples and a large crowd were leaving Jericho, Bartimaeus son of Timaeus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the roadside. ⁴⁷When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" ⁴⁸Many sternly ordered him to be quiet, but he cried out even more loudly, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" ⁴⁹Jesus stood still and said, "Call him here." And they called the blind man,

saying to him, "Take heart; get up, he is calling you." ⁵⁰So throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. ⁵¹Then Jesus said to him, "What do you want me to do for you?" The blind man said to him, "My teacher, let me see again." ⁵²Jesus said to him, "Go; your faith has made you well." Immediately he regained his sight and followed him on the way.

P The Gospel of the Lord.



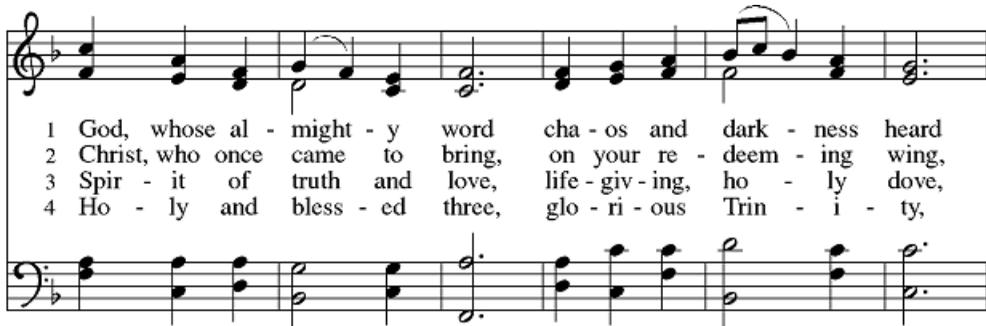
Praise to you, O Christ.

Keiki Sermon

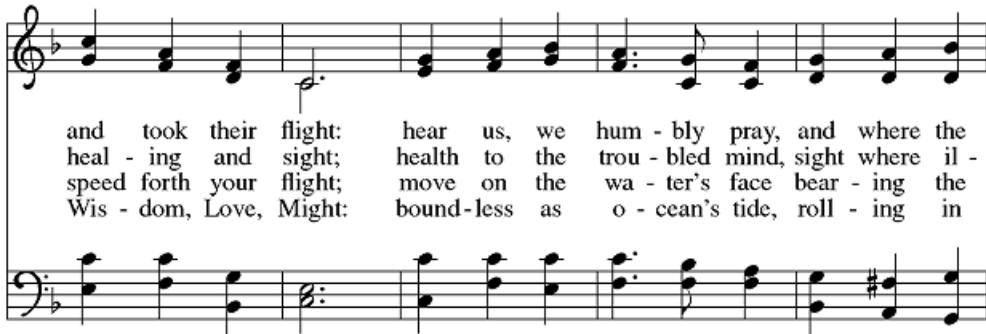
Sermon

*Hymn of the Day

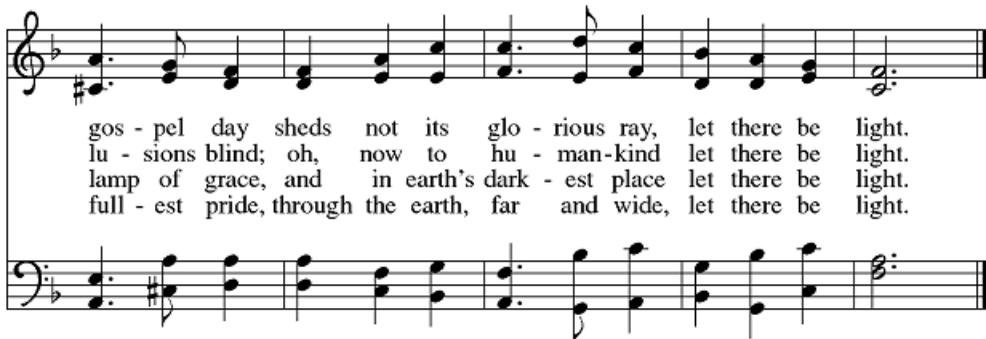
God, Whose Almighty Word



1 God, whose al - might - y word cha - os and dark - ness heard
 2 Christ, who once came to bring, on your re - deem - ing wing,
 3 Spir - it of truth and love, life - giv - ing, ho - ly dove,
 4 Ho - ly and bless - ed three, glo - ri - ous Trin - i - ty,



and took their flight: hear us, we hum - bly pray, and where the
 heal - ing and sight; health to the trou - bled mind, sight where il -
 speed forth your flight; move on the wa - ter's face bear - ing the
 Wis - dom, Love, Might: bound - less as o - cean's tide, roll - ing in



gos - pel day sheds not its glo - rious ray, let there be light.
 lu - sions blind; oh, now to hu - man-kind let there be light.
 lamp of grace, and in earth's dark - est place let there be light.
 full - est pride, through the earth, far and wide, let there be light.

*Apostles' Creed

P Let us join together in reciting the Apostles' Creed

A **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 catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

*The Prayers of the Church

P Set free from sin and death and nourished by the word of truth, we join in prayer for all of God's creation.

A Risen One, we give you thanks for congregations and ministries throughout the world that serve as centers of prayer and action. Empower missionaries, teachers, healers, evangelists, and all who are sent to share your song of joy. Hear us, O God.

C your mercy is great.

A Holy One, we give you thanks for generous land that produces abundant harvests. Strengthen and protect all soils, from rooftop gardens to prairie farmlands, to patio planters to fertile valleys, and bless all who lovingly tend them. Hear us, O God.

C your mercy is great.

A Ruling One, we give you thanks for leaders of nations who work to build up the common good. Strengthen efforts of reconciliation among all nations, that peace extends in every direction. Hear us, O God.

C your mercy is great.

A Healing One, we give you thanks for all who labor for the health of others. Comfort and strengthen all who struggle with chronic pain. Send healing and relief to all who are sick. Hear us, O God.

C your mercy is great.

A Providing One, we give you thanks for all who provide for others. Inspire generosity in your people, so that we carry out the work of making disciples of all nations. Hear us, O God.

C your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

- A Living One, we give you thanks for the saints who have increased our faith. Give us courage to follow in hope until you gather us all around your table of abundance. Hear us, O God.
- C your mercy is great.**
- P Confident that you hear us, O God, we boldly place our prayers into your hands; through Jesus Christ, our truth and life.
- C Amen**

*The Queen's Prayer

Piano

O kou a - lo - ha no A i - a i ka La - ni, A
 No - lai - la e ka - Haku Ma - la - lo kou e - he - u, Ko

6

Pno

o kou oi - a i - o, He he - mo - le - le hoi
 ma - kou ma - lu - hi - a, A mau loa a - ku no. A - me - ne.

English Translation

- O Lord thy Loving Mercy,
 Is high as the Heavens.
 It tells us of thy truth.
 And 'tis filled with holiness

- For thy grace I beseech thee.
 Bring us 'neath thy protection.
 And peace will be thy portion
 Now and forever more. Amen

The Sharing of the Peace

- P The peace of the Lord be with you always.
- C And also with you.**
- P Let us share the peace of the Lord with those here locally and those joining us online via Facebook live! As the ushers come forward, take a minute to share "Aloha" with those joining us online!



Offertory Word

If God puts it on your heart to give, donations can be given here today, mailed in, or given online our website [here](#) or you can copy and paste the weblink below @



https://www.eservicepayments.com/cgi-bin/Vanco_ver3.vps?a_pver3=tYgT1GfNxRUIidiimjHMvORYXmm3bazY6GfrmTtVDZydsksODEa-Up5lt373GHnco2evTpo0mld6BrVzd2nG0p8xSFKZ9u6c4AzLo4CjNx7k=&ver=3

Offertory Response

Lord of Aloha

God of the is - lands, Lord of the seas, Ma - ker of beau - ty and source of the breeze,

5 King of Cre - a - tion, an - cient and new, Lord of A - lo - ha we wor - ship you.

9 Auth - or of mer - cy, Giv - er of grace, Bles - sed Re - deem - er who died in our place, Fath - er of one O

14 ha - na are you, Lift - ing our voic - es we sing "Al - le - lu" Lord of A - lo - ha we wor - ship you.

19 God of the is - lands, Lord of the seas, Ma - ker of beau - ty and source of the breeze,

23 King of Cre - a - tion, an - cient and new, Lord of A - lo - ha we wor - ship you.

27 Lord of A - lo - ha we wor - ship you.

**Offertory Prayer*

- P Let us pray. God of abundance, you cause streams to break forth in the desert and manna to rain from the heavens. Accept the gifts you have first given us. Unite them with the offering of our lives to nourish the world you love so dearly; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
- C **Amen.**

Invitation to Communion

All who are hungry and thirst, come. The table is ready.

**The Words of Institution*

(All are welcome to share in this meal with us. The sacraments are provided in accordance to synodical guidelines in collaboration with CDC, state, and local precautions. If you do not have sacraments, please raise your hand and an usher will bring them to you.)

**The Lord's Prayer*

- P Let us pray the prayer our Lord taught us to pray...
- 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 for give 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 the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**



**The Post-Communion Blessing*

- P May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in His grace.
- C **Amen.**

*The Prayer After Communion

- P Lord of life, in the gift of your body and blood you turn the crumbs of our faith into a feast of salvation. Send us forth into the world with shouts of joy, bearing witness to the abundance of your love in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
- C **Amen.**

Announcements

*The Blessing

- P People of God, you are Christ's body, bringing new life to a suffering world. The Holy Trinity, ✚ one God, bless you now and forever.
- C **Amen.**

*The Sending Song

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.

The image shows a musical score for the song 'Lift High the Cross'. It consists of two systems of music, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The first system is labeled 'Refrain' and contains the lyrics 'Lift high the cross, the love of Christ pro - claim till'. The second system contains the lyrics 'all the world a - dore his sa - cred name.' The piano accompaniment features chords and moving lines in both hands, with some notes beamed together. The vocal line is written in a simple, accessible style with some ties and slurs.

1 Come, Chris - tians, fol - low where our cap - tain trod,
 2 All new - born ser - vants of the Cru - ci - fied
 3 O Lord, once lift - ed on the glo - rious tree,
 4 So shall our song of tri - umph ev - er be:

Refrain

our king vic - to - rious, Christ, the Son of God.
 bear on their brows the seal of him who died.
 as thou hast prom - ised, draw us all to thee.
 praise to the Cru - ci - fied for vic - to - ry!

Dismissal

P Go in peace, the Living Word dwells in you.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Comfort and Consolation

We've all had those "wilderness" experiences, right? The times, days, weeks, months, or even seasons of life where the struggle of faith sets in and we may begin to question the foundations of our relationship with God... "Does God love me?" "Is God (still) there?" "Why would God allow this to happen to me?" "I thought God loved me...(but something happened that makes it feel like 1) God isn't in control or 2) God doesn't love you—because x, y, z, happened.)

It's normal to question. It's normal to doubt. It's normal to feel left, abandoned, or forgotten. Life is tough. Life can be cruel. And in the midst of the harshness and the cruelty, our vision can go astray. We can fail to see or stop seeing God all together, at work in the world or at home in our everyday lives.

If we think forward to the Gospel lesson, I think we are, in some ways, like Bartimaeus. We have trouble seeing. We have issues with our eyes, and we need God to heal our eyes and heal our vision so that we can not only see again, but be able to see God present, at work, and in our lives and in the world we live in. There are dark days where we can struggle to see God at all. And it is in those times that we need God, like He did with Bartimaeus, to heal us and help us to see.

For anyone going through a difficult season in life, who may be struggling to find God at all—in your life or in the world—we find our comfort and consolation in the 31st chapter of Jeremiah. God is here; God is coming; and God is going to bring you out of the distant and far off places you have found yourself. You WILL experience the nearness of God. You WILL experience the help and hope and healing of God. Because God is here. God is coming. And God is coming for you. Hold on, help is coming!

Upcoming Commemorations

Philipp Nicolai, died 1608; Johann Heermann, died 1647; Paul Gerhardt, died 1676; hymnwriters

Tuesday, October 26, 2021

These great hymnwriters all worked in seventeenth-century Germany in times of war and plague. Nicolai, a pastor, lost 1,300 parishioners to plague, 170 in one week. He wrote "O Morning Star, how fair and bright" and "Wake, awake, for night is flying." Heermann's hymns, including "Ah, holy Jesus," often express the emotions of faith. Gerhardt, perhaps the greatest Lutheran hymnwriter, was a pastor in Berlin.

Simon and Jude, Apostles

Thursday, October 28, 2021

We know little about these apostles. Simon is listed as "the zealot" or Cananean in New Testament lists. Jude, also called Thaddeus, asked Jesus at the last supper why he had revealed himself to the disciples but not to the world.

For Further Reflection

Theological Reflection

Today's reading from Jeremiah prophesies good news, that one day the remnant of Israel—the exiles in Babylon—will be brought back to Zion. It is a song of restoration even more than healing. Jesus' healing of Bartimaeus could be interpreted as a fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy. Now Bartimaeus, once separated from participating in the temple rituals because of his ritual uncleanness, has been restored to the community of worshippers. Jesus has healed Bartimaeus not just for the sake of healing, but so Bartimaeus can enter the presence of God. This is why Jesus heals and forgives—for the sake of a restored relationship with God.

Current Event

The recent/ongoing experience with COVID-19 has impacted much of how we minister to our congregations. "Social (or physical) distancing" has become of paramount importance, even a marker of love of neighbor. Consider Jesus' reception of Bartimaeus (and others throughout scripture suffering from illness or infirmity). "Jesus stood still and said, 'Call him here'" (Mark 10:49). How do we extend Christlike incarnate care and welcome for the sick and suffering (and even those who are healthy!), while protecting others who may be especially vulnerable to various communicable diseases?

Let The Children Come

What does mercy look like in this story of Bartimaeus and Jesus? Today's gospel text offers another great opportunity for mystagogy with children because mercy is a big concept that is very present in our liturgy. The church often prays for God's mercy at the beginning of the worship service. Are you using a Kyrie this season? If so, practice it together and notice where it falls in the liturgy. Consider using the same setting of the Kyrie until the end of the church year to allow it time to sink in.

Connection With Creation

Father John Rausch is a Catholic priest serving the Appalachian region of eastern Kentucky. He is known for his advocacy work on behalf of impoverished communities and the mountains destroyed by coal mining. He describes taking a group of residents and activists up to a plateau that had previously been a soaring peak covered in trees and vegetation. After stripmining, the mountain looked like a moonscape. Rausch led the group in a service of mourning and lamentation for all that was lost, but then handed out seeds and saplings for participants to plant. In the words of Psalm 126:5, "Those who sowed with tears will reap with songs of joy." While the mountain will never return to its previous glory, the faithful remnant tended to it with care and hope, trusting in the power of ritual and action to enact God's vision of restoration.

Worship Reflection

What biblical texts stood out to me and why?

What do I feel God is trying to say to me in and through this sermon?

Is the Holy Spirit prompting me to change something in my heart or life? If yes, what is it? What is one step I can take to make a positive change in my life this week?

Where did I see/hear God in the sermon?
