

HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH
ORDER OF WORSHIP May 24, 2020

Brief Order for Confession and Forgiveness (stand)

P: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen

P: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

C: But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Silence for reflection and self-examination

P: Let us confess our sins to God, our Father.

C: From depths of grief I cry to you, O Lord. My voice is trying to reach your heart and, break through with cries and sighing. If you keep a record of our sin and hold against us what we have thought and said and done, who then, can stand before you?

P: Upon this your confession, I proclaim the full and free grace of God to each and every one of you. Your every sin is completely forgiven and you are washed clean in the blood of Jesus Christ, the true and eternal Lamb of God. You now stand in the assembly of the saints of God clothed with the white robe of Jesus' righteousness as your very own. Rejoice and be glad: Jesus is yours, and along with Him, eternal life.

C: Amen.

KYRIE

P: In peace let us pray to the Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

P: For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

P: For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

P: For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

P: Help, save, comfort and defend us gracious Lord.

C: Amen.

THE HYMN OF PRAISE

ALL: Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth. Lord God, heavenly king, almighty God and Father: We worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory. Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God: You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. You are seated at the right hand of the Father; receive our prayer. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

HYMN LSB 783 Take My Life and Let It Be

**Take my life and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee;
Take my moments and my days,
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.**

**Take my hands and let them move
At the impulse of Thy love;
Take my feet and let them be
Swift and beautiful for Thee.**

**Take my voice and let me sing
Always, only for my King;
Take my lips and let them be
Filled with messages from Thee.**

**Take my silver and my gold,
Not a mite would I withhold;
Take my intellect and use
Ev'ry pow'r as Thou shalt choose.**

**Take my will and make it Thine,
It shall be no longer mine;
Take my heart, it is Thine own,
It shall be Thy royal throne.**

**Take my love, my Lord, I pour
At Thy feet its treasure store;
Take myself, and I will be
Ever, only, all for Thee.**

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Job 19:13-20; 25-27a.

"He has alienated my family from me; my acquaintances are completely estranged from me. My relatives have gone away; my closest friends have forgotten me. My guests and my female servants count me a foreigner; they look on me as on a stranger. I summon my servant, but he does not answer, though I beg him with my own mouth. My breath is offensive to my wife; I am loathsome to my own family. Even the little boys scorn me; when I appear, they ridicule me. All my intimate friends detest me; those I love have turned against me. I am nothing but skin and bones; I have escaped only by the skin of my teeth...I know that my redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand on the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see him with my own eyes and not as a stranger."

Psalm 47

(Read Responsively-Reader=unbold Congregation=BOLD)

Clap your hands, all you nations; shout to God with cries of joy.

For the LORD Most High is awesome, the great King over all the earth.

He subdued nations under us, peoples under our feet.

He chose our inheritance for us, the pride of Jacob, whom he loved.

God has ascended amid shouts of joy, the LORD amid the sounding of trumpets.

Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises to our King, sing praises.

For God is the King of all the earth; sing to him a psalm of praise.

God reigns over the nations; God is seated on his holy throne.

The nobles of the nations assemble as the people of the God of Abraham,

for the kings of the earth belong to God; he is greatly exalted.

Ephesians 1:15-23

For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

GOSPEL

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 24th chapter.

C: Glory to You, O Lord.

Luke 24:36-53

While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate it in their presence. He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms." Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, "This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high." When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven. Then they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to You, O Christ

HYMN LSB 537 Beautiful Savior

**Beautiful Savior,
King of creation,
Son of God and Son of Man!
Truly I'd love Thee,
Truly I'd serve Thee,
Light of my soul, my joy, my crown.**

**Fair are the meadows,
Fair are the woodlands,
Robed in flow'rs of blooming spring;
Jesus is fairer,
Jesus is purer;
He makes our sorr'wing spirit sing.**

**Fair is the sunshine,
Fair is the moonlight,
Bright the sparkling stars on high;
Jesus shines brighter,
Jesus shines purer
Than all the angels in the sky.**

Beautiful Savior,
Lord of the nations,
Son of God and Son of Man!
Glory and honor,
Praise, adoration,
Now and forevermore be Thine!

Sermon- Not As A Stranger

At the heart of our Christian faith there are mysteries. Mysteries are things which can neither be explained or nor understood. For example, the Bible teaches us that our God is three persons—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—and yet only one God—a trinity and yet a unity. So God is three and yet God is one. That's a mystery. The Bible also teaches that God wants all people to be saved and that God alone does the saving, and yet not all people are saved. That's a big mystery. Another mystery in the Bible is that Jesus is fully God and also fully human. Theologians call this the dual nature of Christ—that Jesus is both God and man. But that's like saying that someone can be completely wet and completely dry at the same time. By human standards, impossible—but with God all things are possible, so we're left with a mystery. But within this particular mystery there is a hidden treasure—some wisdom which can enrich our faith. So let's go digging! We'll begin with our Gospel lesson for today. In Jesus' final conversation with his disciples before he ascended into heaven, he seems to emphasize his human nature. He says, "While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, 'peace be with you.' they were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. He said to them, 'why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your minds? Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have.'" It's interesting that the first thought the disciples had when they saw Jesus was that he was a ghost. They could accept the fact that there were such things as ghosts even though they had never seen one. Yet they couldn't accept the fact that Jesus was physically human even though they saw physical bodies every day. Knowing their confusion and doubts, Jesus gives them additional evidence that he is human. We read, "When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, "do you have anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate it in their presence." Clearly, Jesus wanted them to realize that he was physically present and not some divine hologram. But even though they were filled with "joy and amazement" that he was appearing to them, they still doubted that he was there physically. And their doubts continued right up to the time he ascended into heaven in front of their eyes. But before we criticize the disciples for their weak faith, let's consider the fact that we too have a problem with the physical humanity of Christ. Most Christians are more comfortable with the idea of a divine Jesus than they are with a fully human Jesus. Which is ironic because in the scriptures, Jesus is more often referred to as a son of man rather than the son of God? But you might ask yourself this: if being tempted by immorality is part of human life, and Jesus is fully human, was Jesus tempted by immorality? And the answer is yes. Listen to what it says in the Book of Hebrews: "for we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin."

Jesus was not only tempted by satan in the wilderness, he was tempted "...in every way, just as we are." Hard—even unpleasant to imagine, but it's true. Knowing that Jesus is the son of God makes it hard for us to imagine that he was tempted by immorality. It isn't hard for an atheist to imagine because an atheist thinks of Jesus as only human—if he thinks of him at all. But for us it's a problem. And not only for us: some of the major heresies that infected the early church stemmed from doubt about Jesus' dual nature. Arianism taught that Jesus was a created being and not the son of God. Adoptionism taught that he was fully human and was only "adopted" by God. Docetism taught that Jesus had no physical body, but was only a spirit—a "ghost" as the disciples called him. A lot of people over the ages—including biblical scholars have had a problem with Jesus' dual nature. In any case, knowing that his disciples were struggling to believe the evidence of their senses, Jesus does what he did with the two men on the road to Emmaus: he points them to the Old Testament scriptures and opens their minds so that they could understand them. Then he just gives them the gospel: "this is what is written," he says: "the Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations..." Like a traveler who returns home from distant lands, Jesus brings his disciples home to the Gospel. The Gospel is God's pure love for us and there is no mystery about God's love. That same Gospel—the good news that God would come as a man to redeem men appears in the Old Testament too. It's the whole point of the *Book of Job*. Job, as you will recall, was a rich and faithful man who was, "blameless and upright" and who "feared God and shunned evil." Yet for reasons beyond his ability to fathom, God allowed satan to take away everything job held dear: his possessions, his children and his health. Job is faced with a mystery: why would God, who had blessed him so abundantly in the past, now turn on him and cause him to suffer. The entire *Book of Job* is about Job's search for an answer to that question. Through it all, Job never wavers in his faith. He knows that there is a God in heaven and he also knows that he has faithfully served that God. He just doesn't understand why God is allowing him to suffer. His so-called friends try to comfort him by using logic to dispel the mystery. Their arguments all boil down to, "you must have done something to deserve this." But job knows better: he knows that he has placed his faith entirely in god and that through his faith his sins have been forgiven. So the mystery remains. And then, after a while, a thought enters job's mind—a thought sent by God. He says, "if there were only someone to arbitrate between us, to lay his hand upon us both, someone to remove God's rod from me so that his terror would frighten me no more." What if there were a mediator between God and me? Someone who could take my complaint to God and bring God's answer back to me? But there is no answer—only silence. And Job's misery continues. Later another thought comes to him—more daring than the first: what if instead of a mediator, i could have an advocate? Someone who would bring my case before God and affirm my faithfulness and good character? He says, "Even now my witness is in heaven; my advocate is on high. My intercessor is my friend as my eyes pour out tears to God; on behalf of a man he pleads with God as a man pleads for his friend...give me, o God, the pledge you demand. Who else will put up security for me?" More than a mediator—an advocate would plead his case before God and put up a bond for him. But again, there is no answer: only silence. And Job's misery continues. Finally, Job realizes that he has lost everything—not only his possessions and his children and his health—but all forms of human contact. He cries out: "[God] has alienated my brother from me; my acquaintances are completely estranged from me. My kinsmen have gone away; my friends have forgotten me. My guests and my maidservants count me a stranger; they look upon me as an alien. I summon my servant, but he does not answer, though I beg him with my own mouth. My breath is offensive to my wife;

I am loathsome to my own brothers. Even the little boys scorn me, when I appear they ridicule me; all my intimate friends detest me; those I love have turned against me." Job is isolated, alone—an outcast. He has nothing left but God—and his faith. And it is through his faith that God gives him the answer he has been seeking: the sure knowledge that he has a Savior. And so, Job says, "I know that my redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see him with my own eyes—and *not as a stranger.*" More than a mediator, more than an advocate, more than a bondsman, Job has a redeemer, a Savior who will one day stand upon the earth and after Job's physical body—his skin and flesh—have been destroyed, yet with his own eyes he will see him. Though he is a stranger to everyone else, he will be no stranger to Christ. The answer to the mystery of Job's suffering is the same answer that Jesus gave his Disciples to the mystery of his presence: the good news of a Savior. A Savior who will one day wipe away every tear from our eyes. Job's suffering and complaints don't end at this point. His "why's" and "why me's" continue even as our "whys" and "why me's" continue as long as we draw a breath. Like Job, we have questions which will go on and on until we meet our Savior face to face. For now he is in heaven where he waits for the Gospel to be preached to all nations. Then He will return and once again He will stand upon the earth. And after these bodies have been destroyed, in our new bodies we will see our Redeemer with our own eyes—and not as a stranger. Amen.

APOSTLE'S CREED

All: 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 was 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.

THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

P: Father in heaven, Please draw close to Glenda Colburn and give her peace upon the death of her husband, Milt. Comfort the entire Colburn family with the knowledge that Milt is even now rejoicing in heaven with Jesus Christ. For Donna Mattmullers sister, Jane Burns with ovarian cancer, now in hospice. Father, draw near to Sue Dunbar's brother who has advanced cancer. Strengthen him in faith and give him peace. Father, guide and sustain us as we recover from the Covid 19 pandemic. As we emerge from isolation and return to our normal way of life, remind us to conduct ourselves safely. Bless and guide those who are conducting research that they may soon find a cure.

In Jesus' name,
C: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

All: 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 the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

HYMN LSB 525 Crown Him with Many Crowns

Crown Him with many crowns,
The Lamb upon His throne;
Hark how the heav'nly anthem drowns
All music but its own.
Awake, my soul, and sing
Of Him who died for thee,
And hail Him as thy matchless King
Through all eternity.

Crown Him the virgin's Son,
The God incarnate born,
Whose arm those crimson trophies won
Which now His brow adorn;
Fruit of the mystic rose,
Yet of that rose the stem,
The root whence mercy ever flows,
The babe of Bethlehem.

Crown Him the Lord of Love,
Behold His hands and side,
Rich wounds, yet visible above,
In beauty glorified.
No angels in the sky
Can fully bear that sight,
But down-ward bends their wond'ring eyes
At mysteries so bright.

Crown Him the Lord of Life,
Who triumphed o'er the grave
And rose victorious in the strife
For those He came to save.
His glories now we sing,
Who died and rose on high,
Who died eternal life to bring
And lives that death may die.

Crown Him the Lord of heav'n,
Enthroned in worlds above,
Crown Him the King to whom is giv'n
The wondrous name of Love.
Crown Him with many crowns
As thrones before him fall;
Crown Him, ye kings, with many crowns,
For He is King of all.

BLESSING

P: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and † give you peace.

C: Amen.