



TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL
LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD

107 North State, Merrill, WI 54452
Church Office: 536-5482 School Office: 536-7501

Rev. Scott Gustafson, Administrative Pastor [715] 351-0016
Rev. Adam Rodriguez, Associate Pastor [812] 707-9644
Lay Minister, Mr. Robert Schneider; School Principal, Kathy Yahr



LENTEN MIDWEEK SERVICE #4

March 25, 2020

6:00 p.m.

AS WE GATHER: This Lent, we use the metaphor of eyesight to examine how the various people in Mark's Gospel viewed Jesus during His Passion. In most cases, they misunderstood who He was and what He was doing; then again, sometimes by faith people did recognize Him correctly.

Gathered in different spaces, we gather in this place to look within ourselves as people of faith in our day. How are we like or unlike the people who saw Jesus in the flesh? Most important, as we gather in separate places for worship, we will see what Jesus has done to save us from our sins by His holy, precious blood and innocent sufferings and death.

Today, we take a look at the chief priests and scribes, who saw Jesus as an obstacle to be rid of by violence. Yet, during the Passover festival, they would unwittingly bring about the sacrifice of the ultimate Passover Lamb. How, then, should we view those who oppose the Gospel in our day? And how might these insights guide our prayers?

THEME HYMN "*Our Eyes Behold the Savior's Face*" [Tune: LSB 418, vs. 1, 3, & 4]

1. ***Our eyes behold the Savior's face
And yet cannot perceive
That His perspective held our grace
Before we could believe.***

3. ***Our sights train on the dreadful cross.
Beneath His knowing eyes,
Our sins are bare and set for loss;
He sees us as His prize.***

4. ***Our vision blurs with anxious tears
As Jesus' eyelids fall
To conquer sin and all our fears
And tear in two our pall.***

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OPENING SENTENCES *(Drawn from: Psalm 121:1–2; 145:15–16; 17:8; 25:15; Job 19:25–27)*

Pastor: I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come?
People: **My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth.**

Pastor: The eyes of all look to You, and You give them their food in due season.
People: **You open Your hand; You satisfy the desire of every living thing.**

Pastor: Keep me as the apple of Your eye;
People: **hide me in the shadow of Your wings.**

Pastor: My eyes are ever toward the LORD,
People: **for He will pluck my feet out of the net.**

Pastor: For I know that my Redeemer lives,
People: **and at the last He will stand upon the earth.**

Pastor: And after my skin has been thus destroyed,
People: **yet in my flesh I shall see God,**

Pastor: whom I shall see for myself,
People: **and my eyes shall behold, and not another. My heart faints within me!**

CONFESSION

Pastor: As we perceive how the people around Jesus were unable to truly see Him, let us confess our own failures to respond to His grace and mercy.

Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

Pastor: The disciples misjudged the good deed of the woman who anointed Jesus,
People: **and we have failed to see that He is pleased with the loving service of His followers.**

Pastor: Judas betrayed Jesus out of fear and for financial gain,
People: **and we have betrayed our weak faith in Him when making difficult decisions.**

Pastor: Jesus' closest disciples gave in to sleep rather than watching and praying,
People: **and we have preferred physical comfort over spiritual turmoil.**

Pastor: Peter failed to keep his bold promise of faithfulness to save his skin,
People: **and we have let Sunday's strength fade when Monday morning dawned.**

Pastor: Jesus fulfilled the promise of salvation, even as His opponents sought to be rid of Him,
People: **and He went to the cross because of our sins as well.**

Pastor: Pilate wanted to keep his political position, the soldiers saw only a weak man on the cross,
People: **and we have let ourselves be deceived by the world's definition of success.**

Pastor: His Father forsook Jesus on the cross as He took all the punishment we deserve,
People: **and we have, at times, focused on our best efforts instead of fixing our eyes on Jesus.**

Pastor: The angel proclaimed Jesus' resurrection to the women,
People: **and we pray that You, heavenly Father, will forgive us all our sins for Jesus' sake. Help us fix our eyes on Jesus each day until we follow Him to our eternal home, where we shall see You face to face.**

FORGIVENESS *(Drawn from Isaiah 64:4)*

Pastor "From of old no one has heard or perceived by the ear, no eye has seen a God besides [the Lord], who acts for those who wait for Him" As a called and ordained servant of Christ, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
People: **Amen.**

FIRST READING 1 John 3:11–15

Pastor: John writes that love is essential for those who have heard the Gospel. A reading from the third chapter of John's First Letter.

¹¹For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. ¹²We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous. ¹³Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you. ¹⁴We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death. ¹⁵Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

Pastor: O Lord, have mercy on us.
People: **Thanks be to God.**

RESPONSORY *(Hebrews 9:11; Mark 14:62; 1 Peter 1:8, adapted)*

Pastor: Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come.
People: **Though we have not seen Him, we love Him. Though we do not now see Him, we believe in Him and rejoice with joy.**

Pastor: You will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power.
People: **Though we have not seen Him, we love Him. Though we do not now see Him, we believe in Him and rejoice with joy.**

Pastor: Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come.
People: **Though we have not seen Him, we love Him. Though we do not now see Him, we believe in Him and rejoice with joy.**

THE PASSION READING *Mark 14:1, 53–65*

Pastor: This Lent, we are looking at the events of our Lord's Passion through the eyes of some of the people who witnessed it. Today, we read the words of the people who unwittingly called for Jesus' death, the sacrifice for all sin.

The Passion of Our Lord according to St. Mark, the 14th chapter.

It was now two days before the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to arrest [Jesus] by stealth and kill Him. . . .

And they led Jesus to the high priest. And all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes came together. And Peter had followed Him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest. And he was sitting with the guards and warming himself at the fire. Now the chief priests and the whole council were seeking testimony against Jesus to put Him to death, but they found none. For many bore false witness against Him, but their testimony did not agree. And some stood up and bore false witness against Him, saying,

People: **We heard Him say, "I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands."**

Pastor: Yet even about this their testimony did not agree. And the high priest stood up in the midst and asked Jesus, "Have You no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against You?" But He remained silent and made no answer. Again the high priest asked Him, "Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?"

Preacher: **I am, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.**

Pastor: And the high priest tore his garments and said, "What further witnesses do we need? You have heard His blasphemy. What is your decision?" And they all condemned Him as deserving death. And some began to spit on Him and to cover His face and to strike Him, saying to Him,

People: **Prophecy!**

Pastor: And the guards received Him with blows.

People: O Lord, have mercy on us.
Thanks be to God.

Pastor: As quick as it is for us to read and condemn the greed and idolatry of the Pharisees, our Sermon Hymn reminds us of the bitter truth that Christ had to die not just for the sins of the scribes and Pharisees but for ours as well. We join in singing selected stanzas of *“Upon the Cross Extended”*.

SERMON HYMN *“Upon the Cross Extended”* [LSB 453, vs. 1-4 & 7]

SERMON Murderous Eyes

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SALUTATION & PRAYERS

*Although the new coronavirus (COVID-19) may be new and unusual,
the response of the church during times of difficulty is not.
In good times and bad, the people of God pray: “Lord, have mercy.”*

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Let us pray . . . Lord, in Your mercy,

People: Hear our prayer.

LORD’S PRAYER - Solo by Mark Knorr

BENEDICTION

Pastor: The blessing of almighty God—the Father, who saw mankind’s hopeless condition, the Son, who showed the depth of God’s love, and the Holy Spirit, who has opened our eyes of faith in Christ—be upon you now and forever.

People: Amen.

Pastor: After thanking our Lord for all He has done, these three stanzas of our closing hymn invite everyone to look to Jesus and see all our sins laid on Him, the Lamb of God. Let us join in singing, *“Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing.”*

CLOSING HYMN *“Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing”* [LSB 528, vs. 3-5]

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