

# THE GOOD NEWS OF A SAVIOR WHO UNITES HEAVEN AND EARTH

April 2, 2025

## AS WE GATHER

Some of the tools and implements that make our lives easier do not have very lengthy histories. Although ladders of rope, wood, and stone have been around for thousands of years, the trusty stepladder we use in so many ways was not invented until 1862, when John Basely of Dayton, Ohio, constructed a hinged ladder so it could be put away easily after use. Ladders have aided humans for centuries. They assist a person to reach high places safely. The ladder in Jacob's dream did that and more—it reached down to him on earth with an affirmation of God's promises. As we worship, God reaches to us with His promises of redemption, forgiveness, and love. What a great vision that is for us to share!

## HYMN #560

*"Drawn to the Cross, Which Thou Hast Blessed"*



1 Drawn to the cross, which Thou hast blessed With heal - ing  
2 Thou know - est all my griefs and fears, Thy grace a -  
3 Wash me and take a - way each stain; Let noth - ing  
4 And then for work to do for Thee, Which shall so



gifts for souls dis - tressed, To find in Thee my  
bused, my mis - spent years; Yet now to Thee with  
of my sin re - main. For cleans - ing, though it  
sweet a ser - vice be That an - gels well might



life, my rest, Christ cru - ci - fied, I come.  
con - trite tears, Christ cru - ci - fied, I come.  
be through pain, Christ cru - ci - fied, I come.  
en - vy me, Christ cru - ci - fied, I come.

Text: Genevieve M. Irons, 1855–1928 Tune: Joseph Barnby, 1838–96

## INVOCATION

**P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen.

## PSALM

*Psalm 121*

**P** I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come?

**C** My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth.

- P** He will not let your foot be moved; He who keeps you will not slumber.
- C** **Behold, He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.**
- P** The LORD is your keeper; the LORD is your shade on your right hand.
- C** **The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night.**
- P** The LORD will keep you from all evil; He will keep your life.
- C** **The LORD will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore.**
- 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.**

## **SALUTATION**

- P** The Lord be with you.
- C** **And also with you.**

## **COLLECT**

- P** Let us pray.  
Eternal God, You so loved the world that You gave Your only Son into death for our sin. Take our lives, Lord, and use them to lift up Your Son so that all will be drawn to Him and find eternal life; for He lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** **Amen.**

## **HYMN INTRODUCTION**

- L** Singing hymns together as the people of God is an activity we may take for granted. That joyful exercise has not always been part of the worship life of the church. In centuries past, the singing of sacred music in churches was limited to the clergy, monks, nuns, and choristers singing the liturgy. During the Middle Ages, some musical reformers in the church brought hymn singing to laypeople through the singing of laudes, which were sacred songs sung in religious processions and at devotional assemblies. “Jesus, Refuge of the Weary” is one of those early hymns, dating back to Italy in the fifteenth century. It calls all of God’s people to repentance and a deeper devotion to Jesus, our Savior, as we view His cross with faith-filled eyes.
- A** The text of this hymn was written by Girolamo Savonarola, one of the most notable churchmen of the Middle Ages. Distressed

by the secular excesses of the city of Florence, Italy, he preached repentance and reform and, for a while, became ruler of the great medieval city. With his spirited preaching and his insistence on destroying whatever he considered detrimental to the society of Florence in what were called “bonfires of the vanities,” he gained strong supporters and made fierce enemies. After public opinion turned against him, he was charged with heresy and executed. Savonarola has been considered by many in the centuries after his death to be one of the first martyrs of the Reformation. Translated into English in the nineteenth century by noblewoman Lady Jane Wilde, the hymn has become a Lenten favorite.

## HYMN #423

## *"Jesus, Refuge of the Weary"*



1 Je - sus, ref - uge of the wea - ry, Blest Re - deem - er,  
 2 Do we pass that cross un - heed - ing, Breath - ing no re -  
 3 Je - sus, may our hearts be burn - ing With more fer - vent



whom we love, Foun - tain in life's des - ert drea - ry, Sav - ior  
 pen - tant vow, Though we see You wound - ed, bleed - ing, See Your  
 love for You; May our eyes be ev - er turn - ing To be -



from the world a - bove: Of - ten have Your eyes, of - fend - ed,  
 thorn - en - cir - cled brow? Yet Your sin - less death has brought us  
 hold Your cross a - new Till in glo - ry, part - ed nev - er



Gazed up - on the sin - ner's fall; Yet up - on the  
 Life e - ter - nal, peace, and rest; On - ly what Your  
 From the bless - ed Sav - ior's side, Grav - en in our



cross ex - tend - ed, You have borne the pain of all.  
 grace has taught us Calms the sin - ner's deep dis - tress.  
 hearts for - ev - er, Dwell the cross, the Cru - ci - fied.

Text: Girolamo Savonarola, 1452–98; tr. Jane F. Wilde, 1826–96, alt. Tune: Erbaulicher Musicalischer Christen-Schatz, 1745, Basel

## FIRST READING

**Genesis 28:10–22**

Jacob left Beersheba and went toward Haran. And he came to a certain place and stayed there that night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed, and behold, there was a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven. And behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it! And behold, the LORD stood above it and said, “I am the LORD, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac. The land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring. Your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south, and in you and your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed. Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land. For I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.” Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, “Surely the LORD is in this place, and I did not know it.” And he was afraid and said, “How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.”

So early in the morning Jacob took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. He called the name of that place Bethel, but the name of the city was Luz at the first. Then Jacob made a vow, saying, “If God will be with me and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear, so that I come again to my father’s house in peace, then the LORD shall be my God, and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God’s house. And of all that you give me I will give a full tenth to you.”

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

## PRAYER RESPONSE

**P** Let us pray.

Lord God, You never slumber nor sleep and Your eyes are always open to our needs. On our journey through this life to the life of the world to come, graciously guide us and guard us through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, for He lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever, and in Him You will keep our going out and our coming in from this time forth and forevermore.

**C** Amen.

## SECOND READING

**Ephesians 2:11–22**

Remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called “the uncircumcision” by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands— remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

## VERSE

**Philippians 2:8**

**C** He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

## HOLY GOSPEL

**John 1:43–51**

**P** The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the first chapter.

**C** Glory to You, O Lord.

The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, “Follow me.” Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.” Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!” Nathanael said to him, “How do you know me?” Jesus answered him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.”

Nathanael answered him, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!” Jesus answered him, “Because I said to you, ‘I saw you under the fig tree,’ do you believe? You will see greater things than these.” And he said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.”

**P** This is the Gospel of the Lord. **C** Praise to You, O Christ.

## HYMN #611

*"Chief of Sinners Though I Be"*



1 Chief of sin - ners though I be, Je - sus shed His  
 2 Oh, the height of Je - sus' love, High - er than the  
 3 On - ly Je - sus can im - part Balm to heal the  
 4 Chief of sin - ners though I be, Christ is all in  
 5 O my Sav - ior, help af - ford By Your Spir - it



blood for me, Died that I might live on high,  
 heav'ns a - bove, Deep - er than the depths of sea,  
 wound - ed heart, Peace that flows from sin for - giv'n,  
 all to me; All my wants to Him are known,  
 and Your Word! When my way - ward heart would stray,



Lives that I might nev - er die. As the branch is  
 Last - ing as e - ter - ni - ty! Love that found me—  
 Joy that lifts the soul to heav'n, Faith and hope to  
 All my sor - rows are His own. He sus - tains the  
 Keep me in the nar - row way; Grace in time of



to the vine, I am His, and He is mine.  
 won - drous thought! Found me when I sought Him not.  
 walk with God In the way that E - noch trod.  
 hid - den life Safe with Him from earth - ly strife.  
 need sup - ply While I live and when I die.

Text: William McComb, 1793–1873, alt. Tune: Richard Redhead, 1820–1901

## SERMON

### “A Savior Who unites Heaven and Earth”

**Genesis 28:10-22**

## HYMN #422

## *"On My Heart Imprint Your Image"*



On my heart im - print Your im - age, Bless - ed Je - sus, King of grace,



That life's rich-es, cares, and plea-sures Nev-er may Your work e-rase;



Let the clear in - scrip-tion be: Je - sus, cru - ci - fied for me,



Is my life, my hope's foun - da - tion, And my glo - ry and sal - va - tion!

Text: Thomas Hansen Kingo, 1634–1703; tr. Peer O. Strømme, 1856–1921, alt. Tune: Johann Balthasar König, 1691–1758

## **The Passion of Our Lord According to Luke – Part 4**

**Narrator:** Then the whole company of them arose and brought Him before Pilate. And they began to accuse Him, saying,

**People:** **We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that He Himself is Christ, a king.**

**Narrator:** And Pilate asked Him,

**Pilate:** Are you the King of the Jews?

**Narrator:** And He answered him,

**Jesus:** You have said so.

**Narrator:** Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds,

**Pilate:** I find no guilt in this man.

**Narrator:** But they were urgent, saying,

**People:** **He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee even to this place.**

**Narrator:** When Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. And when he learned that He belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent Him over to Herod, who was himself in Jerusalem at that time. When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had long desired to see

Him, because he had heard about Him, and he was hoping to see some sign done by Him. So he questioned Him at some length, but He made no answer. The chief priests and the scribes stood by, vehemently accusing Him. And Herod with his soldiers treated Him with contempt and mocked Him. Then, arraying Him in splendid clothing, he sent Him back to Pilate. And Herod and Pilate became friends with each other that very day, for before this they had been at enmity with each other.

Pilate then called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, and said to them,

Pilate: You brought me this man as one who was misleading the people. And after examining Him before you, behold, I did not find this man guilty of any of your charges against Him. Neither did Herod, for he sent Him back to us. Look, nothing deserving death has been done by Him. I will therefore punish and release Him.

Narrator: But they all cried out together,

**People: Away with this man, and release to us Barabbas**

Narrator: a man who had been thrown into prison for an insurrection started in the city and for murder. Pilate addressed them once more, desiring to release Jesus, but they kept shouting,

**People: Crucify, crucify Him!**

Narrator: A third time he said to them,

Pilate: Why, what evil has He done? I have found in Him no guilt deserving death. I will therefore punish and release Him.

Narrator: But they were urgent, demanding with loud cries that He should be crucified. And their voices prevailed. So Pilate decided that their demand should be granted. He released the man who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder, for whom they asked, but he delivered Jesus over to their will.



## OFFERING

### RESPONSIVE LITANY

- P** Hear our prayer, O Lord.
- C** Let our cry come to You.
- P** Lord God, in our journey through this life, help us to build our hopes not on what we have done for You
- C** but on what You have done for us,
- P** and help us to find peace not by searching within ourselves
- C** but by looking to Christ and His cross;
- P** for our hearts are restless
- C** until they find their rest in You.
- P** Gracious God, be with all who are lost and searching,
- C** and draw their hearts to Christ,
- P** that they may know Him as the way, and the truth, and the life,
- C** and find in Him a peace that surpasses all understanding;
- P** for He is the stairway to heaven,
- C** and through Him the door to paradise is open.
- P** Hear us, O Lord, as we silently bring You our private petitions.

*Silent prayer*

- P** Trusting in Your mercy, we pray as Your Son taught us:

### 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 the glory  
forever and ever. Amen.

## BENEDICTION

**P** The Lord bless you, defend you from all evil, and bring you to everlasting life.

**C** Amen.

## HYMN #877 "God, Who Made the Earth and Heaven"



1 God, who made the earth and heav - en, Dark - ness and light:  
2 And when morn a - gain shall call us To run life's way,  
3 Guard us wak - ing, guard us sleep - ing, And when we die,  
△ 4 Ho - ly Fa - ther, throned in heav - en, All - ho - ly Son,



You the day for work have giv - en, For rest the night. May Your  
May we still, what - e'er be - fall us, Your will o - bey. From the  
May we in Your might - y keep - ing All peace - ful lie. When the  
Ho - ly Spir - it, free - ly giv - en, Blest Three in One: Grant us



an - gel guards de - fend us, Slum - ber sweet Your mer - cy send us,  
pow'r of e - vil hide us, In the nar - row path - way guide us,  
last dread call shall wake us, Then, O Lord, do not for - sake us,  
grace, we now im - plore You, Till we lay our crowns be - fore You



Ho - ly dreams and hopes at - tend us All through the night.  
Nev - er be Your smile de - nied us All through the day.  
But to reign in glo - ry take us With You on high.  
And in wor - thier strains a - dore You While a - ges run.

Text (st. 1): Reginald Heber, 1783–1826, alt.; (sts. 2, 4): William Mercer, 1811–73, alt.; (st. 3): Richard Whately, 1787–1863, alt. Tune: Welsh, 18th cent.

## DISMISSAL

**P** Go in peace as you serve the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

Creative Worship for the Lutheran Parish, Series C, Quarter 2.

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Soup & Sandwich Supper will be held each Wednesday from 6:00 to 6:45 PM. Thank you to Carlos for serving this week. ACT is serving the last soup supper next Wednesday.

The Library Used Book Sale is going on during Lent. Books are available for a freewill donation.

ACT Envelope Fundraiser is taking place now. Take an envelope and support our youth. If you fill out the label on the back you will receive a postcard during the Gathering.

Women's Bible Study led by Peggy Winter meets Mondays at 6 PM in the Ed building. All women are invited.

Passion Drama at Zion, Alexandria, will be Palm Sunday, April 13 from 12-4 PM.

ACT Brunch & Silent Auction will be Palm Sunday, April 13. Bring any silent auction items on April 12.

Eggs may be available at the Fellowship Hall desk for a donation to the Jackson Drum family.

Friendship Sunday is April 13. Invite someone to come to worship with you that day.

## **JOIN US FOR HOLY WEEK WORSHIP**

**Palm Sunday April 13, 9 AM**

**Friendship Sunday, Children Singing,**

**10 AM Brunch & Silent Auction**

**Maundy Thursday April 17, 7 PM**

**Maundy Thursday with Holy Communion**

**Good Friday April 18, 2 PM & 7 PM**

**Good Friday Tenebrae with Jesus on the Cross**

**Easter Vigil April 19, 7 PM**

**Easter Vigil Candlelight**

**Easter Sunday April 20, 7 AM, 9 AM**

**7:00 AM Easter Sunrise led by ACT Youth**

**9:00 AM Easter Celebration with Holy Communion**