



St. Luke Ev. Lutheran Church

Rev. Ronald C. Szep, pastor

Sunday, March 29, 2020

MORNING DEVOTION

Jesus will raise us from death to life. The crown jewel of the coming kingdom is the resurrection of the dead. One day, Jesus will defeat the last enemy (1 Corinthians 15:27) and life will reign again in our new Eden with God. On our Lenten walk to Calvary, the Church sees the Savior come face to face with death and defeat it completely. During our Lenten walk, the Prayer of the Day asks God to help us remember that Jesus, who is resurrection and life, has made us heirs of eternal life.

Greeting by the minister

OPENING DIALOGUE:

Minister: God, our Father, each day is a gift of your grace.

Congregation: Your mercies are new every morning.

M: Guide our steps by the light of your Word.

C: Shield us from harm and keep us from evil.

M: Better than life is your love.

C: Put joy in our hearts and praise on our lips.

THE PRAYER FOR GRACE:

M: O Lord, our heavenly Father, almighty and everlasting God, you have brought us safely to this new day. Defend us with your mighty power, and grant that this day we neither fall into sin nor run into any kind of danger; and in all we do, direct us to what is right in your sight, through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.

C: Amen.

TODAY'S GOSPEL READING: John 11:17-27, 38-45

Jesus performed the greatest miracle of his ministry to prove to us the certainty of his greatest promise. Death has hounded mankind since the garden and caused misery that God never intended for his children. When Christ saw the effects of death on his loved ones, he wept with them, but also promised them that one day even this last enemy would be defeated. Martha, too often remembered for her busyness, should be remembered for her confession of faith—so complete, so noble—that encompassed everything Jesus had preached. It even encompassed teachings the disciples struggled to comprehend! She believed in Jesus' promise of a future resurrection, and so Jesus gave proof to her and to us that his promise is true. By that same faith, he will give to us the crown jewel of the kingdom. The one who is resurrection and life will also give resurrection and life to all who believe. Jesus' victory in this battle with death was a forgone conclusion: he thanked God for it in advance. But Lazarus' response to the command of Christ stirs the heart of every Christian who has stared at the ugly face of death: the dead man came out.

¹⁷ On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days.

¹⁸ Now Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem,

¹⁹ and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother.

²⁰ When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home.

²¹ "Lord," Martha said to Jesus, "if you had been here, my brother would not have died.

²² But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask."

²³ Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

²⁴ Martha answered, "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

²⁵ Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die;

²⁶ and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

²⁷ "Yes, Lord," she replied, "I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world."

³⁸ *Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance.*

³⁹ *“Take away the stone,” he said.*

“But, Lord,” said Martha, the sister of the dead man, “by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days.”

⁴⁰ *Then Jesus said, “Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?”*

⁴¹ *So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, “Father, I thank you that you have heard me.*

⁴² *I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me.”*

⁴³ *When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!”*

⁴⁴ *The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face.*

Jesus said to them, “Take off the grave clothes and let him go.”

⁴⁵ *Therefore many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.*

HYMN OF THE DAY: CW Hymn 460 (see last page)

“How Can I Thank You, Lord”

SERMONETTE: based on Romans 8:11-19

“We Are God’s Children”

The indwelling of the Spirit proves our possession of the crown jewel of the kingdom, the resurrection from the dead. If the Spirit is in us, God will most certainly grant true and real life to our mortal bodies. When the Spirit works fruits in our life, he proves to us that he dwells within us and God will give us life. The knowledge of our future glory lets us approach God without fear and bear suffering as children of God and coheirs with Christ.

¹¹ *And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you.*

¹² *Therefore, brothers and sisters, we have an obligation—but it is not to the flesh, to live according to it.*

¹³ *For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.*

¹⁴ *For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God.*

¹⁵ *The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.”*

¹⁶ *The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.*

¹⁷ *Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.*

¹⁸ *I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.*

¹⁹ *For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed.*

PRAYERS:

Luther's Morning Prayer *(in unison)*

I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, your dear Son, that you have kept me this night from all harm and danger. Keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please you. Into your hands I commend my body and soul and all things. Let your holy angel be with me, that the wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Special prayers and intercessions: optional, read by the minister

M: Hear us, Lord, as we bring you our private petitions.

Silent Prayer

M: Eternal God and Father, help us to remember Jesus, who obeyed your will and bore the cross for our salvation that through his anguish, pain, and death we may receive forgiveness of sins and inherit eternal life; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

The Lord's Prayer *(in unison)*

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

BLESSING:

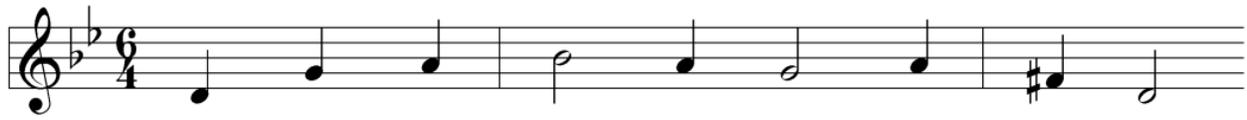
M: May the love of the Lord Jesus draw us to himself. May the power of the Lord Jesus make us strong to do his will. May the peace of the Lord Jesus fill our lives.

C: Amen.

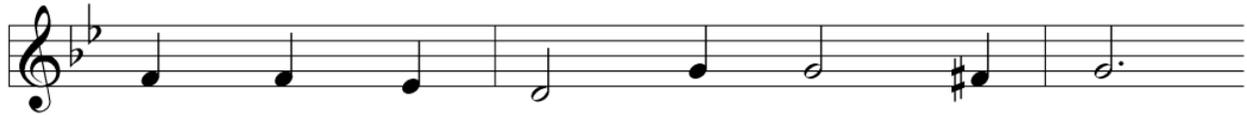
CLOSING VERSE: CW Hymn 414 v3-4 *(next page)*

"I Leave All Things to God's Direction"

414 I Leave All Things to God's Direction



1 I leave all things to God's di - rec - tion;
 2 God knows what must be done to save me;
 3 My God de - sires the soul's sal - va - tion;
 4 My God has all things in his keep - ing;



He loves me both in wealth and woe.
 His love for me will nev - er cease.
 My soul he, too, de - sires to save.
 He is my ev - er - faith - ful friend.



His will is good, sure his af - fec - tion;
 Up - on his hands he did en - grave me
 There - fore with Chris - tian res - ig - na - tion
 He gives me laugh - ter af - ter weep - ing,



His ten - der love is true, I know.
 With pur - est gold of lov - ing grace.
 All earth - ly trou - bles I will brave.
 And all his ways in bless - ings end.



My for - tress and my rock is he:
 His will su - preme must ev - er be:
 His will be done e - ter - nal - ly:
 His love en - dures e - ter - nal - ly:



What pleas - es God, that pleas - es me.
 What pleas - es God, that pleas - es me.
 What pleas - es God, that pleas - es me.
 What pleas - es God, that pleas - es me.

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How Can I Thank You, Lord



1 How can I thank you, Lord, For all your lov - ing -
 2 It is your work a - lone That I am now con -
 3 Lord, you have raised me up To joy and ex - ul -
 4 Grant that your Spir - it's help To me be al - ways
 5 O Fa - ther, God of love, Now hear my sup - pli -



kind - ness, That you have pa - tient - ly Borne
 vert - ed; O'er Sa - tan's work in me You
 ta - tion And clear - ly shown the way That
 giv - en Lest I should fall a - gain And
 ca - tion; O Sav - ior, Son of God, Ac -



with me in my blind - ness! When dead in man - y
 have your pow'r as - sert - ed. Your mer - cy and your
 leads me to sal - va - tion. My sins are washed a -
 lose the way to heav - en. Grant that he give me
 cept my ad - o - ra - tion; O Ho - ly Spir - it,



sins And tres - pass - es I lay, I kin - dled,
 grace That rise a - fresh each morn Have turned my
 way; For this I thank you, Lord. Now with my
 strength In my in - fir - mi - ty; May he re -
 be My ev - er faith - ful guide That I may



ho - ly God, Your an - ger ev - 'ry day.
 ston - y heart In - to a heart new - born.
 heart and soul All e - vil I ab - hor.
 new my heart To serve you will - ing - ly.
 serve you here And there with you a - bide.

Text: attr. David Denicke, 1603–80, abr.; tr. August Crull, 1845–1923, alt.

Tune: O GOTT, DU FROMMER GOTT (II) (67 67 66 66) *Neu-vermehrtes . . . Gesangbuch*, 3rd ed., Meiningen, 1693, alt.