

Welcome to Worship at  
Trinity Lutheran Church, Osceola, WI  
Epiphany 5 - February 7, 2021

P: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer. Amen.

**Hymn #428 - "Why Should Cross and Trial Grieve Me"**

**Why should cross and trial grieve me?  
Christ is near with his cheer; never will he leave me.  
Who can rob me of the heaven  
That God's Son for me won when his life was given?**

**When life's troubles rise to meet me,  
Though their weight may be great, they will not defeat me.  
God, my loving Savior, sees them;  
He who knows all my woes knows how best to end them.**

**God gives me my days of gladness,  
And I will trust him still when he sends me sadness.  
God is good; his love attends me  
Day by day, come what may, guides me and defends me.**

**Since I know God never fails me,  
In his voice I'll rejoice when grim death assails me.  
Trusting in my Savior's merit,  
Safe at last, troubles past, I shall heav'n inherit.**

**Confession of Sins:**

P: Beloved in the Lord, let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins to God our Father, asking Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

C: **Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer, we poor sinners confess to You that we are by nature sinful and unclean and that we have sinned against You in our thoughts, words, and actions. Therefore we flee for refuge to Your infinite mercy, seeking and imploring Your grace and**

**forgiveness for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. O Lord, have mercy on us!**

**P:** Upon this your confession, I as a called servant of Christ and His Word announce to you the grace of God, and in the place of and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

**First Lesson: Job 7:1-7**

Isn't man's time on earth like being compelled to serve in the army? Aren't his days like those of a hired man? Like a slave, he longs for shade, or like a day laborer, he waits for his pay. In the same way, I have been allotted months of futility, and nights of agony have been assigned to me. When I lie down, I think, "How long before I get up?" But the night drags on, and I am filled with restlessness until dawn. My flesh is clothed with maggots and caked with dirt. My skin scabs over and then oozes again. My days pass by more swiftly than the shuttle of a weaver's loom. They come to an end without hope. Remember that my life is just a breath. My eyes will never again see good fortune. (EHV)

**Psalm 103**

**Refrain: I will hear what the Lord proclaims: peace to his people.**

**Praise the LORD, 'O my soul;  
All my inmost being, praise his 'holy name.**

**He forgives 'all your sins  
And heals all your dis'eases;**

**He redeems your life 'from the grave  
And crowns you with love and compassion**

**Refrain: I will hear what the Lord proclaims: peace to his people.**

**The LORD is compassionate and 'gracious,  
Slow to anger, abound'ing in love**

**He does not treat us as our 'sins deserve  
Or repay us according to our ini'quities.**

**For as high as the heavens are a'bove the earth,  
So great is his love for those who 'fear him;**

**As far as the east is 'from the west,  
So far has he removed our transgressions 'from us.**

**Refrain: I will hear what the Lord proclaims: peace to his people.**

**As a father has compassion on his 'children,  
So the LORD has compassion on those who 'fear him;**

**For he knows how 'we are formed,  
He remembers that 'we are dust.**

**Our days are like grass, like a flower 'of the field;  
The wind blows over it and 'it is gone.**

**But the LORD's love is with those who 'fear him  
From everlasting to ever'lasting.**

**Glory be to the Father and 'to the Son  
And to the Holy 'Spirit,  
As it was in the be'ginning,  
Is now, and will be forever. 'Amen.**

**Refrain: I will hear what the Lord proclaims: peace to his people.**

### **Second Lesson: 1 Corinthians 9:16-23**

You see, if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast about, because an obligation is laid on me, and woe to me if I do not preach the gospel! If I do this as a volunteer, I receive compensation. But if not, I have been entrusted with a responsibility as a steward. What then is my compensation? To present the gospel of Christ free of charge when I preach it, instead of making use of the right I have when I preach the gospel. In fact, although I am free from all, I enslaved myself to all so that I might gain many more. To the Jews, I became like a Jew so that I might gain Jews. To those who are under the law, I became like a person under the law (though I myself am not under the law) so that I might gain those who are under the law. To those who are without the law, I became like a person without the law (though I am not without God's law but am within the law of Christ) so that I might gain those who are without the law. To the weak, I became weak so

that I might gain the weak. I have become all things to all people so that I may save at least some. And I do everything for the sake of the gospel so that I may share in it along with others. (EHV)

**Verse of the Day:** Alleluia. Jesus said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” Alleluia.

**Gospel: Mark 1:29-39**

They left the synagogue and went with James and John to the home of Simon and Andrew. Simon’s mother-in-law was lying in bed, sick with a fever. Without delay they told Jesus about her. He went to her, took her by the hand, and raised her up. The fever left her, and she began to serve them. That evening, when the sun had set, the people kept bringing to him all who were sick and demon-possessed. The whole town gathered at the door. He healed many people who were sick with various diseases and drove out many demons. But he did not allow the demons to speak, because they knew who he was. Jesus got up early in the morning, while it was still dark, and went out. He withdrew to a solitary place and was praying there. Simon and his companions searched for him, and, when they found him, they said to him, “Everyone is looking for you!” He told them, “Let’s go somewhere else, to the neighboring villages, so that I can preach there too. In fact, that is why I have come.” Then he went throughout the whole region of Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons. (EHV)

**The Apostles’ Creed:**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there He will come 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.**

**Hymn #93 - *"Hail to the Lord's Anointed"***

**Hail to the Lord's Anointed,  
Great David's greater Son!  
Hail, in the time appointed,  
His reign on earth begun!  
He comes to break oppression,  
To set the captive free,  
To take away transgression,  
And rule in equity.**

**He comes with rescue speedy  
To those who suffer wrong,  
To help the poor and needy  
And bid the weak be strong,  
To give them songs for sighing,  
Their darkness turn to light  
Whose souls, condemned and dying,  
Are precious in his sight.**

**Kings shall bow down before him  
And gold and incense bring;  
All nations shall adore him;  
His praise all people sing.  
To him shall prayer unceasing  
And daily vows ascend,  
His kingdom still increasing,  
A kingdom without end.**

**O'er ev'ry foe victorious,  
He on his throne shall rest,  
From age to age more glorious,  
All blessing and all-blest.  
The tide of time shall never  
His covenant remove;  
His name shall stand forever -  
That name to us is Love.**

**The Sermon:      Job 7:1-7  
                          "Life Is Just A Breath"**

For those of you who don't know it already, the Rosenow family owned a 200 acre **farm** in East Farmington, out on the **river** road. My **great-grandparents** and **grandparents** farmed there until my grandfather died from leukemia. Then the farm was **sold**. As the oldest grandchild, I inherited a number of family **heirlooms**. One of them is a copy of Die Heilige Schrift - The Holy Bible in German, which belonged to my great-grandfather. Copies of this book are **not** especially **rare** - but this particular copy **is** rather **unusual**. You see, in spite of its age, this Bible is in pretty good shape, except for the Book of **Job**. In fact, this Bible was opened so **often** to that book, that the **pages** are in tatters, and **binding** is actually **broken** there. Just out of curiosity, I opened it to chapter 7, and there was an **x** marking the words of our text for today. There is the **possibility** that none of this **means** anything at all. However, I think it is more **likely**, that my great-grandfather lived through some rather **difficult** times, and that he frequently turned to the Book of **Job** for **comfort**. One of the things we learn from the Book of Job is that **Life Is Just A Breath**. Sometimes it is a breath of **fresh** air, sometimes it is a breath **polluted** by **sin**, but it is **always** the breath of **God**.

Regardless of the **good** things or **bad** things which we experience in our earthly life, we're only here for a **short** time - and when those times have been **bad**, it's **comforting** to know that those days aren't going to **last** for very long, and that God is ultimately in **control** of them. **Job's** life was perhaps as **difficult** as anyone's has **ever** been. Let me give you a little **background** information.

When the Book of Job begins, we learn that Job lived in the land of **Uz**. Although we aren't completely **sure**, it seems most likely that this is the same land which we know as **Edom**. We are told that Job was a **wealthy** man - "*the greatest of all the men of the East.*" The description of his wealth shows us that God had **richly** blessed Job - even by **modern** standards. We're told that Job had **7 sons, 3 daughters, 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, 500 female donkeys,** and a **very large retinue of servants**. We're also told that the relationship between Job's sons and daughters was a **good** one - there was no **backbiting** or **bickering** between them.

Job is also described as being "*blameless and upright; a man who feared God, and turned away from evil.*" Job knew exactly where his blessings had come from, and he regularly gave **thanks** and offered **sacrifices** to the one true **God**, out of **gratitude**. At this time Job must have been a **very** happy man - a man who had reached a point in his life where he didn't **need** to work just to make **ends** meet, but rather he could take some time to **enjoy** the fruits of his labor. For the time

being, his life was a breath of **fresh air**. That is, until the **tests** started to come.

We're told that **Satan** had a conversation with **God** - a conversation in which God used **Job** as an example of great **faith**. But Satan **scoffed** at the suggestion. He told God, *"Is it **without cause** that Job fears God? You have put a protective **hedge** around him and his household and everything that belongs to him, haven't you? You have **blessed** the work of his hands. His livestock has spread throughout the land. But just stretch out your hand and **strike** everything that is his, and he will certainly **curse** you to your face."* It was a **challenge** which God was not going to **ignore**. To prove that Satan was **wrong**, God gave him the permission to **take away** all of Job's possessions. But at the same time, God did **not** allow Satan to touch Job **himself**.

Nevertheless, in a single day, through a series of disasters, Job lost **all** of his ten **children**, **all** of his **flocks** and **herds**, and all but a **handful** of his **servants** who survived only to report the tragic incidents to Job. I can't imagine a more **devastating** day in the life of **any** human being. All of a sudden, the breath of Job's life had turned **stale** and **sour** and **polluted**. But through it all, Job **still** does **not** curse God. Instead we hear him say, *"**Naked** I came from my mother's womb, and **naked** I will return. The **LORD** gave and the **LORD** has **taken away**; may the name of the **LORD** be **blessed**."*

That certainly proves Job's faith to **me**, but it wasn't **good** enough for the **devil**. He went back to God a **second** time, and said, *"Skin for skin! A man will give all he **has** for his **life**. But stretch out your hand and strike his **bones and flesh**, and he will **certainly** curse you to your face!"* A **second** challenge - a challenge which God was **equally** confident that Job would be able to **meet**. So, God **again** allowed Satan to attack His servant - this time striking Job **himself** - with the one **restriction**, that Satan could **not** take Job's **life**. The breath of Job's life was about to become even **more** putrid than before.

That's where our **text** for today picks up. Job is **weeping** and **wailing** over his physical infirmities - he is **lamenting** the day that he was **born** - his is **wishing** that he were **dead**. But Job is **not** cursing God. As our text begins, we see Job's faith **bending**, but not **breaking**. We hear him say, *"Isn't man's time on earth like being **compelled** to serve in the **army**? Aren't his days like those of a **hired man**? Like a **slave**, he longs for shade, or like a **day laborer**, he waits for his **pay**. In the same way, **I** have been allotted months of **futility**, and nights of **agony** have been assigned to me."*

Job refers to the days of his life as being **compelled** to serve in the **army**. Military life hasn't really changed much over the years. It is a life based on **discipline** and **obedience**. The military slogan, "Ours is not to reason **why**, ours is but to **do** or **die**," would have applied in **Job's** day just as it does in our **own**. Such **blind** obedience is **difficult**, especially when you have been **compelled** to carry it out. Job feels like he doesn't have any **control** over his life. He simply **must do** whatever it is that **God** wants him to do.

You've felt that way **too**, haven't you? When we feel as if our lives are out of **control**, we need to remember who is **in** control of our lives. **God** is. Sometimes it really is **difficult** to do what God wants us to do with our lives. But God **loves** us, and **provides** for us, and **cares** for our every need. How could we possibly go **against** His wishes, when we know that He is only doing what is **best** for us? Job didn't **understand** that there was a **test** behind his afflictions. But he **did** understand that **God** was in control, and that God **loved** him. So, he continued to **hang on** to God, even when he was in the **depths** of despair.

Job also refers to the days of his life as the work of a **hired man** - even a **slave**. The hired man and the slave both have things in common. They **work** for **someone else**. Their **efforts** bring **benefits** to someone else. In return, the slave receives a **place** to live, and **rest** at the end of the day - while the hired man receives his **wages**. That's **something**, but it's really not **enough**. Job is **frustrated** that he has lived his life for **God**, and **God** has seemingly received **all** the **benefits**.

Job is **struggling** with the thought that perhaps **he** should be receiving something **better** from God. And who can **blame** him? Listen to the way his disease is described. *"When I lie down, I think, 'How long before I get up?' But the night drags on, and I am filled with restlessness until dawn. My flesh is clothed with maggots and caked with dirt. My skin scabs over and then oozes again."* Job's nights are **sleepless**, and his days are **painful**. The symptoms of his disease have been compared to elephantiasis - a disease which is marked by an enormous **enlargement** of parts of the body, caused by **parasites** blocking the **lymph** system. Without knowing any more details than **that**, it already makes my skin **crawl**. Yet, even through such suffering, Job does **not** curse God.

Have you ever felt as if God wasn't giving you what **you** deserve? Well, your suspicions are **correct**. God **hasn't** given you what you deserve. And you can be **grateful** that He has treated you with such **mercy**. If God really gave us what we **deserved**, then by comparison, the sufferings of **Job** would look like a stroll in the park. The breath of our life has been **polluted** by **sin**, and our **sins** have earned



us an **eternity of separation from God** in the torments of **hell**. **That's** what we really **deserve**.

Even **Job** knew that his life wasn't **that** bad, because he knew that our earthly life is **temporary** and that it comes to an end **quickly**. Our text concludes, "*My days pass by more **swiftly** than the **shuttle** of a weaver's loom. They come to an end without **hope**. Remember that my **Life Is Just A Breath**.*" Everybody knows how **time flies**, and the older we get, the more **swiftly** it seems to move. Because of his intense **agony**, Job **hoped** that his life would come to an end **soon**. Little did he realize at the time, that God would **not** take his life away, but rather, He would **restore** Job's **earthly** life - granting him even **more** blessings than Job had experienced in the **past**, and allowing him to **live** yet another 140 years!

Even so, our **Life Is Just A Breath** - a single breath of **God**. At the creation of Adam we learn that man had his **beginning** when, "*the **LORD** God formed the man from the dust of the ground and **breathed into** his nostrils the **breath of life**, and the man became a living being.*" Then in the Book of Ecclesiastes we learn that man reaches his **end** when, "*the dust goes back into the ground - just as it was before, and the **spirit** goes back to **God** who gave it.*" That's all there is to life. God breathes life **into** us ... (exhale) ... and then whenever He chooses, He takes that life **back** again ... (inhale). **One breath of God**, and our life is over.

My dear friends in Christ, may we always realize that our **Life Is Just A Breath** - a breath which will be **over** all too soon. And whether that life is a breath of **fresh air** filled with many **blessings**, or whether it is a breath of **stale air** filled with many **problems**, may we recognize it as a **gift from God**, and wisely **use** the days of our life to **serve God** and give Him **glory**. Amen.

### **Prayers:**

Almighty God, merciful Father, as **troubled** and **repentant** sinners we come to You, and confess that we have **sinned** against You in our thoughts, words, and actions. We have not loved **You** with our whole heart, nor have we loved **others** as we should. We are truly **distressed** by our sins, and are deeply **sorry** for them. Do not bring Your servants into **judgment**, for no one living is **righteous** before You.

O Lord, You have **heard** our prayer, **listened** to our cries for mercy, and in Your faithfulness have come to our **relief**. How **blessed** we are that we who were conceived and born in **sin**, and who by our sins were Your **enemies**, can now be called Your **children** through faith in Christ. In no way do we **deserve** this great privilege and honor, but we **thank** You for sending Your Son to **free** us from all

guilt, and to **spare** us from all punishment. Help us to daily **crucify** our sinful flesh with its lusts and affections, that we might live our lives for **You**. Grant us a **steadfast** faith that we may not lose the redemption which You purchased for us by Your blood. Amen.

**The Lord's Prayer:**

**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 #441 - "*O God, Our Help in Ages Past*"**

**O God, our help in ages past,  
Our hope for years to come,  
Our shelter from the stormy blast,  
And our eternal home,**

**Under the shadow of your throne  
Your saints have dwelt secure;  
Sufficient is your arm alone,  
And our defense is sure.**

**Before the hills in order stood  
Or earth received its frame,  
From everlasting you are God,  
To endless years the same.**

**A thousand ages in your sight  
Are like an evening gone,  
Short as the watch that ends the night  
Before the rising sun.**

**Time, like an ever-rolling stream,  
Soon bears us all away;  
We fly, forgotten, as a dream  
Dies at the op'ning day.**

**O God, our help in ages past,  
Our hope for years to come,  
Still be our guard while troubles last  
And our eternal home!**

P: Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace, according to Your Word, for my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of Your people Israel. 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.

**The Blessing:**

P: The Lord bless you and keep you,  
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.

C: **Amen.**

**Hymn #345 - *"In the Cross of Christ I Glory"***

**In the cross of Christ I glory,  
Tow'ring o'er the wrecks of time.  
All the light of sacred story  
Gathers round its head sublime.**

**When the woes of life o'ertake me,  
Hopes deceive and fears annoy,  
Never shall the cross forsake me;  
Lo, it glows with peace and joy.**

**When the sun of bliss is beaming  
Light and love upon my way,  
From the cross the radiance streaming  
Adds more luster to the day.**

**Bane and blessing, pain and pleasure  
By the cross are sanctified;  
Peace is there that knows no measure,  
Joys that through all time abide.**