

Welcome to Worship at
Trinity Lutheran Church, Osceola, WI
Easter 7 - May 16, 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 #168 - *“With High Delight Let Us Unite”*

**With high delight let us unite
In songs of sweet jubilation.
You pure in heart, each take your part,
Sing Jesus Christ, our salvation.
To set us free forever, he
Is ris’n and sends to all earth’s ends
Good news to save ev’ry nation.**

**True God, he first from, death has burst
Forth into life, all subduing. His enemy shall vanquished lie;
His death has been death’s undoing.
“And yours shall be like victory
O’er death and grave,” said he, who gave
His life for us, life renewing.**

**Let praises ring; give thanks and bring
To Christ our Lord adoration.
His honor speed by word and deed
To ev’ry land, ev’ry nation.
So shall his love give us above,
From misery and death set free,
All joy and full consolation.**

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: Acts 1:15-26

In those days, when the group there numbered about 120 people, Peter stood up among the brothers and said, “Gentlemen, brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through the mouth of David about Judas, who became a guide for those who arrested Jesus. Judas was counted as one of us and was given a share in this ministry. Now this man acquired a field with what he was paid for his wicked act. When he fell headfirst, his middle burst open, and all his intestines spilled out. This became known to all the residents of Jerusalem, and so in their own language that field was called Akeldema, which means Field of Blood. Indeed, it is written in the book of Psalms: May his residence be deserted. Let there be no one dwelling in it. And, let someone else take his position. Therefore it is necessary that one of the men who accompanied us during the entire time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from his baptism by John until the day Jesus was taken up from us, become a witness with us of his resurrection.” They proposed two: Joseph called Barsabbas (who was also called Justus) and Matthias. Then they prayed, “Lord, you know everyone’s heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen to take the place in this apostolic ministry from which Judas turned away to go to his own place.” Then they assigned lots for them, and the lot fell to Matthias. So he was counted with the eleven apostles. (EHV)

Psalm 8

Refrain: I will praise your name forever, my King and my God.

**O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in ‘all the earth!
You have set your glory above the ‘heavens.**

When I consider your ‘heavens,

The work of your ‘fingers.

**What is man that you are mind’ful of him,
The Son of Man that you ‘care for him?**

Refrain: I will praise your name forever, my King and my God.

**You made him a little lower than the heavenly ‘beings
And crowned him with glory and ‘honor.**

**You made him ruler over the works ‘of your hands;
You put everything un’der his feet.**

**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 praise your name forever, my King and my God.

Second Lesson: 1 John 4:13-21

This is how we know that we remain in him and he in us: He has given us of his Spirit. We have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. If anyone confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God remains in him and he in God. We also have come to know and trust the love that God has for us. God is love. Whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him. In this way his love has been brought to its goal among us, so that we may have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are just like Jesus. There is no fear in love, but complete love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who continues to be afraid has not been brought to the goal in love. We love because he first loved us. If anyone says, “I love God,” but hates his brother, he is a liar. For how can anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, love God, whom he has not seen? This then is the command we have from him: The one who loves God should also love his brother. (EHV)

Verse of the Day: Alleluia. Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Alleluia.

Gospel: John 17:11b-19

Holy Father, protect them by your name, which you gave me, so that they

may be one as we are one. While I was with them, I kept those you gave me safe in your name. I protected them and not one of them was destroyed, except the son of destruction, so that the Scripture might be fulfilled. “But now I am coming to you, and I am saying these things in the world, so that they may be filled with my joy. I have given them your word. The world hated them, because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I am not asking that you take them out of the world, but that you protect them from the Evil One. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them by the truth. Your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I also sent them into the world. I sanctify myself for them, so they also may be sanctified by the truth.” (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 #359 - “Jesus, My Great High Priest”

**Jesus, my great High Priest,
Offered his blood and died;
My guilty conscience seeks
No sacrifice beside.
His pow’rful blood did once atone,
And now it pleads before the throne.**

**To Christ, my substitute,
Will I commit my cause;
He answers and fulfills
His Father’s broken laws.
Behold my soul at freedom set -**

My Jesus paid the dreadful debt!

**My advocate appears
For my defense on high;
A gracious Father hears
And lays his thunder by.
Not all that hell or sin can say
Shall turn his heart, his love, away.**

**Should all the hosts of death
And pow'rs of hell unknown
Put their most dreadful forms
Of rage and mischief on,
I shall be safe, for Christ displays
Superior pow'r and guardian grace.**

**The Sermon: John 17:11b-19
 “Jesus Prays For Us”**

If you've ever been in the **hospital**, or faced some kind of **traumatic** event in your life, then you know that at those times people often have difficulty knowing what to **say** to you. They want to bring us **comfort**, but at the same time they don't want to sound **trite** or **insincere**. One of the things that's usually very **comforting** to hear are the simple words, "I've been **praying** for you," or, "We said a **prayer** for you in church today." It's **comforting** to know that people are **concerned** about us, and that they're bringing our needs to our Father in heaven. This morning we can receive great comfort and confidence in knowing that **Jesus Himself Prays For Us**. He prays for our **protection**, and He prays for our **sanctification**.

The words of our text are part of what is usually called Jesus' **high priestly** prayer. This is the **longest** prayer of Jesus recorded in the Scriptures. It comes at a very **pivotal** moment in His life on earth, and ultimately, in the history of our **salvation**. Jesus prayed this prayer in the presence of His **disciples** on Maundy Thursday. We can't tell from Scripture if it was prayed while He was still in the upper room in Jerusalem, or while they were walking toward the Mount of Olives. But what we **do** know is that it took place **after** Jesus had instituted the **Lord's Supper**, and **before** He went off by Himself in the Garden of Gethsemane. This was a prayer that Jesus wanted His disciples to **hear**, and since it's **recorded** for us in the **Bible**, He obviously wanted **us** to hear it as well.

The section of the prayer we're looking at this morning is the part where Jesus was praying specifically for His **disciples**. Just think about it. In a very short time Jesus was going to be **arrested** in the Garden of Gethsemane. The **whips**, the crown of **thorns**, and the **nails** were all just **minutes** away from Him. And yet, whom was Jesus **thinking** of, and **praying** for at that time? It wasn't for **Himself** - it was for His **disciples**. Jesus knew that the days, months, and years which lay **ahead** for them would be very **difficult** for them to face. **Everything** in their lives was going to drastically **change**. They would no longer have Jesus visibly **with** them as He had been in the **past**, when He **walked** with them from town to town, and **taught** them day after day. Instead, many severe **difficulties** and **temptations** would be coming their way. So, the **first** part of Jesus' prayer for them is that they would remain **protected**. He prayed, "*Holy Father, **protect** them by your name, which you gave to me. While I was **with** them, I kept those you gave me **safe** in your name. I protected them and not one of them was **destroyed**, except the son of **destruction**, so that the **Scripture** might be **fulfilled**.*"

For three years, Jesus had been **guarding** and **protecting** these disciples. Think about how much **time** Jesus had spent with His disciples - **instructing** them in the faith - performing **miracles** in their presence - **correcting**, **rebuking** and **encouraging** them with the Holy **Scriptures**. Jesus invested His **time** in them for a **purpose** - and the purpose was to **protect** them from evil, and to **keep** them in the one true **faith** so they could become His **witnesses**. During His lifetime here on the earth, Jesus had cared for them **so well**, that none of them had been **lost** - except for **Judas**, whose tragic decision to **betray** His Lord and fall **away**, had sealed his own fate.

But **now**, in a very short time, Jesus would be **leaving** His disciples, and returning to His Father in **heaven**. He wanted them to **know** that even though their relationship was going to be **different**, they were **not** going to be **unprotected**. In this prayer, Jesus was entrusting their protection into the hands of His heavenly **Father**. That knowledge must have brought the disciples great **comfort**, even as Jesus prayed to His Father with **these** words, "*But now **I am coming to you**, and I am saying these things in the **world**, so that they may be filled with my **joy**.*" Even though Jesus was going to be **leaving** His disciples, they could be sure that in the **difficult** times which were to come, and in the most **severe** trials which they would encounter, they would still be able to find **joy** in their lives, because their **Heavenly Father** was still **watching over** them and **protecting** them.

Jesus' words give **us** the **same** joy. As we face the troubles and anxieties of living in this sinful world, there are times when we can start to feel as though we're

all on our **own** - as if we are going through these trials and tribulations all by **ourselves**. All too often even the people we consider to be our **friends** - people whom we should be able to **rely on** when we need their **support** - let us **down**. At times we might even be tempted to think that **God Himself** has abandoned us - that He has **given up** on us - that He no longer **cares** about us. But that would be **impossible**. The **disciples** didn't need to **worry** about being left **alone** or being **unprotected** - and neither do **we**. That thought **never** even has to cross our minds, because God Himself has **promised** us, "*I will **never** leave you, and I will **never** forsake you,*" and God **always keeps** His promises.

When we're tempted to think that Jesus no longer **cares** for us, it's good to remember this **high priestly prayer** which Jesus prayed for His **disciples** on Maundy Thursday, and then to remember where Jesus **is**, and what He's **doing right now**. He's in **heaven** - where He's sitting at **God's right hand**, and **praying** the very same prayer for **us**. He's **interceding** with the heavenly Father on **our** behalf - He's **pleading** for our **protection**. And God the Father **answers** that prayer through **His Word**. Jesus said, "*I have **given** them **your word**. The world **hated** them, because they are not **of the world**, just as **I** am not **of the world**."*

God does **so much** to **protect** us, and to keep us **safe** from the **world** around us - the world which **hates** us. He sends His holy **angels** to **physically** protect us. But even more than **that**, each and every day He **protects** what is **most precious** to us - our eternal **soul** - and He **does** it through **His Word**. Jesus **freed** our souls from the **slavery** of sin, through the work of the **Gospel** - daily providing us with the **message** that Jesus **lived** for us, and **died** for us - that Jesus **defeated** our greatest enemies; **sin**, **death**, and the **devil** - that on the **cross** Jesus **purchased** and **won** eternal **salvation** for us. As our **High Priest**, Jesus keeps our souls **protected** by continually nurturing them with His **Word**, which proclaims for us His promises of **grace** and **mercy**. Jesus will **continue** to keep our souls **safe**, until we rest for all eternity with Him in **heaven**. Nothing can take that Gospel truth **away** from us, and because of that **truth**, we will **always** have joy.

As our text continues, we see that Jesus also prayed for something **else** for His disciples in His high priestly prayer. In the **final** verse of our text, Jesus prayed, "***Sanctify** them by the **truth**. Your **Word** is **truth**.*" Jesus prayed for the **sanctification** of His disciples. **Sanctification** is one of those **big, fancy** words that we **read** in the Bible, and that we **hear** in church and Bible study. It's an **important** word, so it's also important that we understand what it **means**. Sanctification means to be **set apart** for God. It means to be taken **off** from the **worldly** path of wicked and sinful ways, and to be placed **on** the path which

matches **God's will**. God wants **us** to think and act **differently** from the rest of the world - to live according to a **higher** standard. And what **is** that standard? It's the truth of **God's Word**. As the disciples lived using the Word of God as their **guide**, their lives would be truly **special**. Their lives would serve as an **example** for others, and as a **witness** for the impact of the **Gospel** on a person's life.

Jesus' prayer for **us** is the **same**. He wants us to be **sanctified** - to be **set apart** for God and His purposes. And the tool which God uses to **carry out** that sanctification in **our** lives is **also** the same - it's His **Word**. The world doesn't understand the **value** of God's Word. And because of that it **attacks** the Word, and wants us to **reject** it as the **truth** which guides our lives. Jesus' prayer is that we would **not** be led **astray** by them - that we would **never** doubt the **truth** of God's Word. The **fact** of the matter is that God has opened our **eyes** to **see** the truth of His Word, and as we turn to that Word again and again, we only become **more** convinced that what God's Word says is **true**, while what the **world** says is full of **lies**.

God doesn't leave any stone **unturned** in His Word. In it He **convicts** us of our **sin** with His **Law**, and in it He also shows us our **Savior** from sin in the **Gospel**. God's Word also serves as a wonderful **guide** for our daily lives, as we strive to think and act **differently** from the world around us. That doesn't mean that when we become Christians, we immediately become **perfect** and no longer continue to **sin**. Our sanctification is a life-long **process** - a process in which we continue to **grow** - and that **growth** isn't always **steady**. Often there are **setbacks** along the way, and our walk with Jesus becomes like riding on a **roller coaster** - with **highs** and **lows** - **good** days and **bad**. But our ultimate **goal** is that each day we may strive to live lives which are **more** sanctified than the day before. That's Jesus' prayer for us too, and it's a prayer that is **answered** every time we turn to God's Word for **strength** and **guidance**.

Jesus' prayer in these verses certainly brought comfort to His **disciples** at a time when they **desperately** needed it. There will also be times in our lives when we will need that **same** comfort. Maybe it'll be **today**. Maybe it'll be **tomorrow**. Maybe it'll come somewhere further down the **road**. But when that day **comes** - and it most certainly **will** - remember the prayer which Jesus prayed for His **disciples**, and realize that He's praying those words for **our** benefit as well. Our ascended Lord cares about our well-being. **Jesus Prays For Us**, and He will **continue** to pray for us, offering prayers which will always be **answered** by the heavenly Father as He **protects** us and **sanctifies** us every day of our lives. Amen.

Prayers:

Lord Jesus, Savior of the world, we thank You for Your victory over sin, death, and the grave; and for Your triumphant ascension into heaven where You have gone to prepare a place for us. When we **sin**, continue to **plead** for us with Your heavenly Father. When we **stray**, bring us **back** into Your fold. Lay on our hearts Your command to **go** into all the world and **preach** the Gospel to every creature. Help each of us to become **personal** missionaries for You. Move us to speak to our unchurched **friends** and **neighbors** about their **sins**, and about Your **salvation**. Make us **bold** to be workers for You. Fill us with a glowing **love** for the souls of others, and help us by our **lives**, our **words**, our **offerings**, and our **prayers** to win as many souls as possible for You.

When we become weary, **renew** our zeal, and **comfort** and **strengthen** us with the assurance that You are **with** us, even to the end of the world. And finally, when You **return** on the Last Day to judge the world in righteousness, take us and all believers to Your glorious mansions in **heaven**, where we will live in eternal **bliss** with all those You have redeemed. 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 #536 - "Lord Jesus Christ, the Church's Head"

**Lord Jesus Christ, the Church's head,
You are her one foundation.
In you she trusts, before you bows,
And waits for your salvation.
Built on this rock secure,
Your Church shall endure
Though all the world decay**

**And all things pass away.
Oh, hear, oh, hear us, Jesus.**

**O Lord, let this your little flock,
Your name alone confessing,
Continue in your loving care,
True unity possessing.
Your sacraments, O Lord,
And your saving Word
To us e'er pure retain.
Grant that they may remain
Our only strength and comfort.**

**Help us to serve you evermore
With hearts both pure and lowly.
And may your Word, that light divine,
Shine on in splendor holy
That we repentance show,
In faith ever grow.
The pow'r of sin destroy
And evils that annoy.
Oh, make us faithful Christians.**

**And for your gospel let us dare
To sacrifice all treasure;
Teach us to bear your blessed cross,
To find in you all pleasure.
Oh, grant us steadfastness
In joy and distress.
Lord, for your mercy's sake,
Let us by grace partake
Of endless joy and glory.**

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 #175 - *“Hail the Day that Sees Him Rise”*

**Hail the day that sees him rise
To his throne above the skies!
Christ, the Lamb for sinners giv’n,
Reascends his native heav’n.**

**There the glorious triumph waits:
Lift your heads, eternal gates.
He has conquered death and sin;
Take the King of glory in!**

**See, the heav’n its Lord receives,
Yet he loves the earth he leaves;
Though returning to his throne,
Still he calls mankind his own.**

**See, he lifts his hands above;
See, he shows the prints of love.
Hark! His gracious lips bestow
Blessings on his Church below.**

**Still for us he intercedes;
His prevailing death he pleads.
He, the first of all our race,
Near himself prepares a place.**

**There we shall with you remain
Partners in your endless reign,
There your face unclouded view,
Find our heav’n of heav’ns in you.**