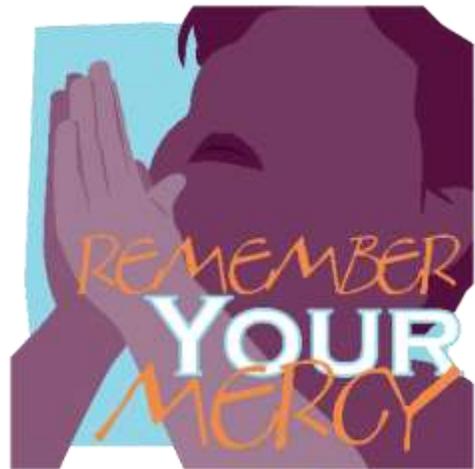


ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
LITTLETON, COLORADO

February 28, 2021

10:30 a.m. Sunday



SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

The God Who Brings Us Together

AS WE GATHER *(Based on Ephesians 4:1-16)*

Pastor continues his seventh week taking us through the book of Ephesians. Today we are in the beginning of chapter four. Paul asks us to live a life WORTHY of the calling the Lord has put on our lives since Christ has died for us. What might a "worthy life" look like? Giving money? Attending Church regularly? Doing good works of service for others?

The answer might surprise you. He says "keep your unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace." That's how you live a "life worthy" - by being one and living as one. Paul gives examples of what this looks like: "humble," "gentle," "patient," "bearing with one another in love."

Given the way our world acts today, especially in the world of politics, where disunity, anger, hatred, accusations, cancel culture and even vengeance are at play, we have nowhere else to turn to for good examples except Scripture itself. Paul first asks us to remember who we are in Christ, stressing that there is only ONE Lord, ONE faith, ONE baptism, ONE God and Father of us all. There is not a two-party system of equals or three branches of government to keep each other in check in the Lord. There is only "ONE God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all." And He has distributed gifts to His church of pastors, teachers, evangelists, etc., with ONE purpose: that we "reach UNITY in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature."

UNITY. This is impossible for us to achieve in the world, in culture or in politics. But in Christ, living out our faith, it is a MUST and is a sign of true Christian maturity. Anything less is to be like "infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming."

Gathering Song

Your Everlasting Love

Bill Batstone

Your everlasting love is higher
Higher higher than the sky
Your everlasting love is higher
Higher higher than the sky
Higher than the sky Oh the wonder of Your everlasting love Is higher than the sky

**CHORUS: Higher than the heavens above
Is the glory of Your wonderful love
I'm lost in the mystery of
Your everlasting love Your everlasting love**

Your everlasting love is deeper
Deeper deeper than the sea
Your everlasting love is deeper
Deeper deeper than the sea
Deeper than the sea Oh the wonder of Your everlasting love
Is deeper than the sea **CHORUS**

Your everlasting love is reaching
Reaching reaching out to me
Your everlasting love is reaching
Reaching reaching out to me
Reaching out to me Oh the wonder of Your everlasting love
Is reaching out to me **CHORUS**

✧ PREPARATION ✧

Pastoral Greeting

Opening Song

All the Power You Need

Fragar

My God can never fail He's been proved time and again
Trust Him you'll see He's got all the power you need
He's never early never late It takes courage and it takes faith
Trust Him you'll see he's got All the power you need
He saves forgives and heals Takes back what the devil steals
My debt's paid in full And every day He does miracles **BACK TO BEGINNING**

**CHORUS: I got dreams turn them into plans Too big for human hands
Trust Him you'll see He's got all the power you need
He's real He's real Faith's a lot stronger than what you feel
He's real He's real I'm believing for miracles REPEAT CHORUS**

I got dreams turn them into plans Too big for human hands
Trust Him you'll see He's got all the power you need
Trust Him you'll see He's got all the power you need

Invocation

Confession and Absolution

Incorporating *Genesis 17:7; Psalm 22:27; Romans 5:6, 9–10*

Pastor: God established an everlasting covenant with Abraham,

People: but our faith has waxed and waned. O Lord, forgive our forgetfulness of Your unchanging grace.

Pastor: David wrote, “All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD,”

People: but we have failed to remind one another of God’s mercy and love. O Lord, forgive our hesitancy to share the news of Your gracious presence.

Pastor: Paul wrote that because Christ died for the ungodly, we are justified by His blood,

People: but we have tried to hide our sinfulness. O Lord, forgive our blindness to the necessary sacrifice of our Savior.

Pastor: God sent His Son into the world with one purpose: to save us from the wrath of God. “For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by His life.” 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. Thanks be to God.

✠ WORD ✠

Epistle: Ephesians 4:1-16

(Paul encourages us to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.)

As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. This is why it says:

“When he ascended on high, he took many captives and gave gifts to his people.”

(What does “he ascended” mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.) So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his

people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Verse *Joel 2:13b*

Pastor: Return to the LORD, your God,

People: **for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love. Amen.**

Holy Gospel: Mark 8:27-38

(Truly knowing Christ means following Him.)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to Mark, the 8th Chapter.

People: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

Jesus and his disciples went on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked them, "Who do people say I am?"

They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets."

"But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"

Peter answered, "You are the Christ."

Jesus warned them not to tell anyone about him.

He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again. He spoke plainly about this, and Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him.

But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. "Get behind me, Satan!" he said. "You do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men."

Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it. What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful

generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels."

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to You, O Christ.

Children's Message

Pastor John Larson

Song of the Day

Bind Us Together

Red 43



Bind us to - geth - er, Lord, bind us to - geth - er with cords that can - not be bro - ken.

Fine



Bind us to - geth - er, Lord, bind us to - geth - er, Bind us to - geth - er with love. _____



There is on - ly one God. _____ There is on - ly one King. _____



There is on - ly one bo - dy, _____ That is why I sing: _____

D.C. al Fine

Sermon

"The God Who Brings Us together"

Pastor John Larson

TEXT: Ephesians 4:1-16

Apostles' Creed

People: I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And 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 sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence 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.

Prayer of the Church

Pastor: Lord, in your mercy...

People: Hear our prayer.

Offering *Offerings will be collected at the back, in the Narthex.*

✠ HOLY COMMUNION AT ASCENSION ✠

The Lord, our Host, invites to his Supper those who are baptized into the Christian faith, confess him as Savior, have been instructed and have examined themselves, truly repent of sins, believe the Risen Lord is present in the sacrament with his true body and blood, and resolve to live faithfully and obediently. For those with an intolerance to alcohol, the center ring of the tray contains grape juice. Gluten free wafers are available to those with wheat allergies. Children who have not been instructed, yet desire a blessing, are invited to come forward with arms crossed. When receiving the bread and wine, the communicant may respond with "Amen!", a word of affirmation and belief.



✠ SACRAMENT ✠

Preface (Divine Service, Setting One)

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: **We lift them to the Lord.**

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

Words of Institution

Lord's Prayer

People: 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.

Distribution Music **Blest Be the Tie That Binds**

LSB 975



1 Blest be the tie that binds Our hearts in
2 Be - fore our Fa - ther's throne We pour our
3 We share our mu - tual woes, Our mu - tual
4 When here our path - ways part, We suf - fer
5 From sor - row, toil, and pain, And sin we



Chris - tian love; The fel - low - ship of
ar - dent prayers; Our fears, our hopes, our
bur - dens bear, And of - ten for each
bit - ter pain; Yet, one in Christ and
shall be free And per - fect love and



kin - dred minds Is like to that a - bove,
aims are one, Our com - forts and our cares.
oth - er flows The sym - pa - thiz - ing tear.
one in heart, We hope to meet a - gain.
friend - ship reign Through all e - ter - ni - ty.

Public domain

General Communion Blessing

Benediction (Divine Service, Setting One)

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

People: Amen.

Jesus Christ is our Cornerstone
 He's the Rock He's the Solid Foundation
 We are building on Jesus alone
 Building up as the people of God

Each of us is a living stone
 Precious stones in the building of Jesus
 In this house we don't stand all alone
 We are one we're the people of God

CHORUS: Living stones...We are living
Living stones...Built on Christ
Living stones...Holy people of God
Building on the firm foundation of Christ (Repeat Chorus)

Jesus You are our Cornerstone You're the Rock
 You're the Solid Foundation
 We are building on Your love alone
 Build us up as the people of God

Each of us is a living stone
 We're alive in the love of Jesus
 We are trusting in Jesus alone
 We are His We're the people of God **CHORUS**

Congregational Concerns

Dismissal

Pastor: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

(and Row by Row Dismissal)



Serving in Worship

OFFICIANT and CELEBRANT
 DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRIES
 PRAISE TEAM

Pastor John Larson
 Michael Zehnder
 Youth Praise Team