

ALL SAINTS' DAY

November 1, 2020 – 9:30 a.m.

PRELUDE “Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty” -Timothy Albrecht

Words for meditation:

1 Open now thy gates of beauty;
Zion, let me enter there,
Where my soul in joyful duty
Waits for Him who answers prayer.
Oh, how blessed is this place,
Filled with solace, light, and grace!

4 Thou my faith increase and quicken;
Let me keep Thy gift divine,
Howsoe'er temptations thicken;
May Thy Word still o'er me shine
As my guiding star through life,
As my comfort in all strife.

Text: Public domain

“For All the Saints” -set. Robert Hobby

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

Pastor: Our help is in the name of the Lord,

People: who made heaven and earth.

Pastor: If You, O Lord, keep a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?

People: But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared.

Pastor: Since we are gathered to hear God's Word, call upon Him in prayer and praise, and receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in the fellowship of this altar, let us first consider our unworthiness and confess before God and one another that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and that we cannot free ourselves from our sinful condition. Together as His people let us take refuge in the infinite mercy of God, our heavenly Father, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, and saying: God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

People: Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.

Pastor: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Almighty and everlasting God, You knit together Your faithful people of all times and places into one holy communion, the mystical body of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Grant us so to follow Your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living that, together with them, we may come to the unspeakable joys You have prepared for those who love You; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

FIRST READING *Revelation 7:9–17*

After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying, “Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen.” Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, “Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?” I said to him, “Sir, you know.” And he said to me, “These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE *1 Thessalonians 2:17 - 3:13*

But since we were torn away from you, brothers, for a short time, in person not in heart, we endeavored the more eagerly and with great desire to see you face to face, because we wanted to come to you—I, Paul, again and again—but Satan hindered us. For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you? For you are our glory and joy. Therefore when we could bear it no longer, we were willing to be left behind at Athens alone, and we sent Timothy, our brother and God’s coworker in the gospel of Christ, to establish and exhort you in your faith, that no one be moved by these afflictions. For you yourselves know that we are destined for this. For when we were with you, we kept telling you beforehand that we were to suffer affliction, just as it has come to pass, and just as you know. For this reason, when I could bear it no longer, I sent to learn about your faith, for fear that somehow the tempter had tempted you and our labor would be in vain. But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and has brought us the good news of your faith and love and reported that you always remember us kindly and long to see us, as we long to see you—for this reason, brothers, in all our distress and affliction we have been comforted about you through your faith. For now we live, if you are standing fast in the Lord. For what thanksgiving can we return to God for you, for all the joy that we feel for your sake before our God, as we pray most earnestly night and day that we may see you face to face and supply what is lacking in your faith? Now may our God and Father himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way to you, and may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you, so that he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

HOLY GOSPEL *Matthew 5:1–12*

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the fifth chapter.

People: Glory to You, O Lord.

Seeing the crowds, [Jesus] went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him. And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil

against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to You, O Christ.

APOSTLES' CREED

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.

SERMON 1 Thessalonians 3:1-13 “Praying Like Paul”

- I. Sobering Statistics-What do we do?
- II. Paul’s Problem (1 Thessalonians 2 and Acts 17)
 - How does Paul view the Thessalonians?
 - Why was he separated from them? What does he do?
- III. We pray for people to grow in the faith (v. 10)
 - How does Paul view God and prayer?
 - The word translated *supply* can also mean _____.
- IV. We pray for people to abound in _____ (v.12)
 - What word for love is used? What does it mean?
 - Why do we pray for others and ourselves to abound in love?
- V. We pray for people to become secure in _____ (v.13)
 - What hope do we have?

Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Amen. Can you identify with the following statistics? Do you, a loved one, friend, or neighbor come to mind? Studies are beginning to come out about the other side effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, and they aren’t good. Recent studies have reported that around 80% of people under 30 have reported feeling lonely, depressed, hopeless, or nervous. In 2018, that number was 46%. It isn’t that much better for other age groups, with every age bracket hovering around 50%! Another sobering statistic is that 1 in 4 Americans have reported that they have spoken with no one about something important to them in the past six months. Should it be any surprise that depression, anxiety, addiction, abuse, and loneliness are on the rise? They are, and they don’t look like they will be slowing down anytime soon.

We live in a world of hurting and broken people that we are separated from. Our loved ones, friends, or ourselves, can be suffering immense pain and loss, and we can’t be with them, or have others with us. Maybe their world has caved in and collapsed. Perhaps they have been hit by unemployment, cancer, infertility, health woes, divorce, or death. Maybe it happened to us. We want to do something, anything, really. It is our natural instinct and reaction to help, but what can we do? It might not be possible to go see them. Perhaps they are too vulnerable, or the risk is too great. Reassuring them with your physical presence is not a possibility. Maybe seeing them face to face is not an option. What do we do for our hurting loved ones, or selves, in such a time as this?

Paul the Apostle can certainly relate. Paul had that same question. The Thessalonians were his dear loved ones. Paul calls them his “**glory and joy.**” Last week, we heard how he described their relationship as “**a nursing mother taking care of her own children,**” and “**like a father with his children.**” He also writes, “**We were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also *our own selves*, because you had**

become very dear to us.” Paul deeply loves the Thessalonians. He cares about them. He was suddenly separated from them.

In Acts 17, Luke tells us how this happened. Some of the Jews were jealous of Paul, and so **“they formed a mob,”** and **“set the city in an uproar.”** They charged, **“These men who have turned the world upside down have also come here...and they are all acting against the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another King, Jesus.”** Paul’s opponents were out for blood! They were going for treason and the death sentence. The apostle had to run for his life under the cover of night to Berea.

In doing so, he left these dear believers in trying circumstances. Paul tells us about in 2:14-15 by saying: **“You suffered from your own countrymen the same things those churches suffered from the Jews, who killed the Lord Jesus, and the prophets, and also drove us out.”** The Thessalonians faced accusations, threats, rejection, and opposition. The Apostle was hindered from coming back, and could not see them face to face. What does Paul do for those he loved? What does he do for those who are suffering so much? What does he do for those he cannot be with? He prays. What do we do? We pray. We pray like Paul.

We pray for people to grow in faith. We pray that our faith may be strengthened. Paul writes in verse 10: **“Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you again and supply what is lacking in your faith.”** To Paul the Apostle, God is not a distant, impersonal, or abstract concept, but a closing, caring Lord, Who hears our cries and provides in Christ. To Paul, prayer is a conversation with a close and caring God. That is why Paul prays earnestly night and day. He wants us to do the same. In 5:17, the apostle encourages *us* to **“pray without ceasing.”** Our hesitancy to pray is a dishonor to the God who stands ever near. Consider that He is present now, and ready to hear us. Consider that He wants you to pray.

And what does Paul ask? What is the content of his prayer? To **“supply what is lacking in your faith.”** The term translated “supply” also appears in the New Testament in contexts where fishermen mend their nets. Paul knows that the Thessalonians have faith; there is no doubt about that. In chapter 1, he says how their faith has gone out throughout the world. But, Paul also knows this; they are lacking. Their nets need mending! This will always be true of Christians, won’t it? Our nets need mending. We all need healing. When a Christian we knew is struggling under the weight of crushed dreams, health woes, financial troubles, devastating set-backs, you name it, the first thing they need is a stronger faith. They need a stronger trust in God’s promises of care, love, and mercy. When we find ourselves in a similar situation, we too need the same things and a growth in a faith. Our God is present, near, and ready to hear.

What else do we pray for? We pray for people to abound in love, us included. Paul says in verse 12: **“May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you.”** Paul prays that love may increase and overflow. The word he uses is *agape*, which is an unconditional love. It is the love that God has for us! Paul prays for love to increase and overflow. You see, when the world collapses, the temptation is to become self-absorbed, and to turn inwards. We might not want to be as generous, caring, loving, or serving. We justify it by saying that we have so much going on. Perhaps, we say, it would be too risky. We say that we aren’t able to expend those things right now. However, being self-absorbed never works, nor does it help! So, we pray for people to begin, again, to live outside themselves. To serve. To assist. To help. For their love to increase and overflow. We ask God to make us go from closed to caring, and from selfish to serving. We ask to be grounded in that *agape* love that God pours out and gives through Christ. A love that loves me when I fail, when I’m hard to be with, when I’m unlovable; a love that cares for me, does what is for my good, that is patient, kind, self-less, and forgiving. We ask that God would fill us and them with that love so that it can flow to others.

Lastly, we pray for people to become secure in hope. We ask God to strengthen us in this hope. Paul writes in verse 13: **“May He strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones.”** The report Paul received was encouraging, but they weren’t out of the woods yet. What do all people need most when they are going through tough times? They need to see the big picture. They need to see what God has planned. Isn’t that the beauty of All Saints’ Day? As we give thanks to God for the lives of the faithful, we are also comforted and reminded where they are: with Christ in paradise. The suffering and death of Jesus means that we will stand holy and blameless when Christ returns with all of his holy ones.

At the cross, Jesus took the full brunt of your sin and mine. He bore all our shame and guilt. He bore our sickness and diseases. He was forsaken by God so that we never would be. His death means we live. His resurrection means we will live forever.

We pray for others and for us to become secure in this hope, Christ crucified and risen for me. The hope that Christ is coming again to restore everything we have lost. All the years of pain will be erased. Every tear of disappointment will be wiped away. The spouse snatched by disease will run into your arms. The health that eluded you in the winter of your life will return a thousand-fold. The friends and family who have died in the faith will sit next to you, singing in the heavenly choir, forever!

How do we come to the aid of people who are crushed by life's random events? Who are hanging on by a thread? What do we do when we are separated from them, and far away? We pray. We pray like Paul. "Now may our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way to you, and may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you, so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints." Jesus is coming. Amen.

COMMEMORATION OF THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

Pastor: Holy Scripture says in Psalm 116:15: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." On this All Saints' Day, we remember and give thanks and praise to God for the life and for the death of His saints. We rejoice with those who rejoice, and that includes rejoicing with those whose happiness now knows no end in the kingdom of glory. During the past year, families in our congregation and our extended church family have been impacted greatly by the death of ones we love. As those who trust in Jesus Christ, we do not grieve as the rest of the world grieves. We grieve in hope, we pray with confidence, and we live with certainty that those who have died in Christ are secure in His presence. We also rejoice that one day we shall join them in their heavenly joy, which knows no end.

We honor the life and give thanks to God for these His saints:

Bonnie Lowe, Eino Mattson, Sandy Weingarth, Dale Connolly, Barb Radefeldt, Harriet Marks, Don Preston, Roland Uran, Armin Tesch, Rev. Jeffrey Walther

Pastor: ...and all others dear to our hearts who have entered into everlasting rest with the Lord Jesus. Let us pray. Merciful Father, whose dear Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, rose victoriously over death and the grave, we remember with thanksgiving Your faithful people who have trusted in Christ, whose tears are gone, and whose sorrows You have turned to joy. We humbly implore You to strengthen us in the confident hope of the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

MUSIC DURING PREPARATION "Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word" -set. Thomas Gieschen
Words for meditation:

1. Lord, keep us steadfast in Your Word;
Curb those who by deceit or sword
Would wrest the kingdom from Your Son
And bring to naught all He has done.

3. O Comforter of priceless worth,
Send peace and unity on earth;
Support us in our final strife
And lead us out of death to life.

Text: Public domain

PREFACE

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.

Pastor: It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God. Throughout the ages You have given us sure promises, all fulfilled in Your Son, so that, encouraged by those who have preceded us in the faith and looking forward in confident hope to seeing Him face-to-face, we find comfort here on earth until it is our joy to join angels and archangels and all the company of heaven to laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

SANCTUS

People: Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth adored;

Heav'n and earth with full acclaim shout the glory of Your name.

Sing hosanna in the highest, sing hosanna to the Lord;

Truly blest is He who comes in the name of the Lord!

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Blessed are You, O Lord our God, king of all creation, for You have had mercy on us and given Your only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

In Your righteous judgment You condemned the sin of Adam and Eve, who ate the forbidden fruit, and You justly barred them and all their children from the tree of life. Yet, in Your great mercy, You promised salvation by a second Adam, Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, and made His cross a life-giving tree for all who trust in Him.

We give You thanks for the redemption You have prepared for us through Jesus Christ. Grant us Your Holy Spirit that we may faithfully eat and drink of the fruits of His cross and receive the blessings of forgiveness, life, and salvation that come to us in His body and blood.

Hear us as we pray in His name and as He has taught us:

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.

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

Pastor: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

PAX DOMINI

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

People: Amen.

DISTRIBUTION

You are invited to receive the Lord's Supper if you believe and confess that Jesus Christ is your Savior from sin, you are a baptized child of the Triune God, and you believe that He gives you His body and blood in the bread and wine you receive. White grape juice can be found in the center of each tray for those who cannot receive alcohol. Children are welcome to come forward for a blessing.

MUSIC DURING DISTRIBUTION "Converse" -J. Bert Carlson; set. Robert Hobby

POST-COMMUNION COLLECT

Pastor: Let us pray. We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

BENEDICAMUS

Pastor: Let us bless the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

BENEDICTION

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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

POSTLUDE "Thine the Amen, Thine the Praise" LSB 680

1. Thine the amen Thine the praise

Alleluias angels raise

Thine the everlasting head

Thine the breaking of the bread

Thine the glory Thine the story

Thine the harvest then the cup

Thine the vineyard then the cup is lifted up lifted up.

2. Thine the life eternally

Thine the promise let there be

Thine the vision Thine the tree

All the earth on bended knee

Gone the nailing gone the railing

Gone the pleading gone the cry

Gone the sighing gone the dying what was loss lifted high.

3. Thine the truly Thine the yes

Thine the table we the guest

Thine the mercy all from Thee

Thine the glory yet to be

Then the ringing and the singing

Then the end of all the war

Thine the living Thine the loving evermore evermore.

4. Thine the kingdom Thine the prize
Thine the wonder full surprise
Thine the banquet then the praise
Then the justice of Thy ways
Thine the glory Thine the story
Then the welcome to the least
Then the wonder all increasing at Thy feast at Thy feast.

5. Thine the glory in the night
No more dying only light
Thine the river Thine the tree
Then the Lamb eternally
Then the holy holy holy
Celebration jubilee
Thine the splendor Thine the brightness only Thee only Thee.

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Acknowledgments

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

GENEROSITY THOUGHTS: *Matthew 5:7 – “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.”* This is one of many Bible passages that remind us that we reap what we sow. Likewise, what God puts into us – His own love, mercy, kindness, and generosity – flows back out of us. It all starts with His self-giving.

THANK YOU: On behalf of Oromo Evangelical Church of Minnesota, I would like to thank you for your unreserved support in opening your door for us to use the church building for our services. Your respect for our services, your love for our members, and your care for our entire ministries were well noted and was presented to our members during our Church Annual Meeting on September 13, 2020. The members expressed their gratitude and decided to write a thank you letter for your church. Accordingly, it is my pleasure to say thank you on behalf of the members of our church for what you have done and still are doing to strengthen our church service. It would not have been easy to be where we are today if you hadn't opened your door for us. May God bless you abundantly. Sincerely, Yemane Aleku

YOUR HELP is needed again this year for the Mission's annual Thanksgiving food distribution. The past few years the Social Ministries Committee has been able to collect food and create meal bags for the Union Gospel Mission. For over 60 years, Union Gospel Mission Twin Cities has provided thousands of meals during Thanksgiving to our community, while offering volunteer opportunities and building connection with local churches. Due to the realities of COVID-19 and the impact it has on how they serve the community, we know that the need for their services and access to meals will be more vital than ever this Thanksgiving season. To maintain safety for our community members, their volunteers, and staff, they are changing the format of our Thanksgiving Food Drive this year, while still serving our community with compassion and hospitality. Union Gospel Mission is accepting **financial donations only**. Due to COVID-19 and its spread, we are asking individuals to donate money only to our Thanksgiving Food Bag event. They will purchase Thanksgiving food items in bulk, stretching your dollars even further. A donation of \$25 will purchase everything for a complete Thanksgiving Meal, however, any amount is welcome. Please use the following link to donate if you are able: <https://app.mobilecause.com/vf/TGBags/team/EmmausLutheranChurch> or you can donate via text: Text

TGBags10 to 71777 (Msg & data rates may apply). Even though this event will look different this year, the gospel and how we live out our faith hasn't changed.

PRAYER AND BIBLE STUDY: Starting on Wednesday, November 11th at 2:15 p.m., we will have a prayer and Bible Study group. Each week, we will gather together to pray and study a text. We will be meeting in-person and virtually. For those that attend virtually, we will have you join us via Zoom (contact Pastor Kooi for the link). Please contact Pastor Kooi for more details.

HEAR "THE LUTHERAN HOUR" on Sunday mornings at 6:05 a.m. on WCCO 830 AM radio. Next week's broadcast: "Tied into the Same Lifeline" Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler. Humble pie is on the menu at an ill-fated feast. (Daniel 5)