



Sunday, March 17, 2024
5th Sunday in Lent

Service Theme
RETHINKING DEVOTED COMMITMENT

Religious sociologists sometimes divide Christians into two groups: committed Christians and cultural Christians. The former are usually defined as those who are active in a congregation, who pray regularly, who read Scripture, etc. The latter are those individuals who call themselves Christian and perhaps have some Christian beliefs. Yet, they do not strive to live a Christian life. They are not interested in church involvement. Those definitions are interesting when trying to understand shifts in American Christianity. However, they demonstrate a false assumption about the Christian religion. There is indeed a devoted commitment at the center of Christianity, but it is not man's commitment to God. Even believers will, at times, demonstrate lukewarm commitment at best. Instead, at the heart of Christianity we find God's devotion and commitment to us. It is a devoted commitment so strong that it put God on the cross.

Hymn

CW 387 Drawn to the Cross

- 1 **Drawn to the cross, which you have blessed
With healing gifts for souls distressed,
To find in you my life, my rest, Christ crucified, I come.**
- 2 **How well you know my griefs and fears,
Your grace abused, my misspent years;
So now to you with contrite tears, Christ crucified, I come.**
- 3 **Wash me and take away each stain;
Let nothing of my sin remain.
For cleansing through your cross and pain,
Christ crucified, I come.**
- 4 **To pledge my labor willingly,
Which shall so sweet a service be
That angels well might envy me, Christ crucified, I come.**

Order of Service

Service of Word and Sacrament (CW p.26)

- M:** The grace of our Lord (+) Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.
- C:** **And also with you.**

CONFESSON OF SINS

- M:** God invites us to come into his presence and worship him with humble and penitent hearts. Therefore, let us acknowledge our sinfulness and ask him to forgive us.
- C:** **Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful and that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good. For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity. But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.**

M: God, our heavenly Father, has been merciful to us and has given his only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son (+) and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

PRAYER AND PRAISE
(CW p.27)

M: For all that we need in life and for the wisdom to use all your gifts with gratitude and joy, hear our prayer, O Lord.

C: *(sing)* **Lord, have mercy.**

M: For the steadfast assurance that nothing can separate us from your love and for the courage to stand firm against the assaults of Satan and every evil, hear our prayer, O Christ.

C: *(sing)* **Christ, have mercy.**

M: For the well-being of your holy Church in all the world and for those who offer here their worship and praise, hear our prayer, O Lord.

C: *(sing)* **Lord, have mercy.**

M: Merciful God, maker and preserver of life, uphold us by your power and keep us in your tender care:

C: *(sing)* **Amen**

M: The works of the Lord are great and glorious; his name is worthy of praise.

C: *(sing)*

**O Lord, our Lord, how glorious is your name in all
the earth.**

**Almighty God, merciful Father, you crown our life
with your love.**

**You take away our sin; you comfort our spirit;
you make us pure and holy in your sight.**

**You did not spare your only Son, but gave him up
for us all.**

**O Lord, our Lord, how glorious is your name in all
the earth.**

**O Son of God, eternal Word of the Father, you
came to live with us;
you made your Father known;
you washed us from our sins in your own blood.**

You are the King of glory; you are the Lord!

**O Lord, our Lord, how glorious is your name in all
the earth.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

(CW p.29)

M: Let us pray.

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 the forgiveness of sins, victory over the grave, and finally 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:(Sing) Amen.

1st Lesson

Isaiah 43:1-7 (EHV)

In devoted commitment the LORD promises his people that even if they need to pass through raging waters or walk through a wall of fire, he will be right there with them.

But now this is what the LORD says,
the LORD who created you, O Jacob,
the LORD who formed you, O Israel.

Do not be afraid, because I have redeemed you.

I have called you by name. You are mine.

²When you cross through the waters, I will be with you.

When you cross the rivers, they will not sweep you away.

When you walk through fire, you will not be burned,
and the flame will not set you on fire.

³Because I am the LORD your God,
the Holy One of Israel, your Savior,
I gave Egypt as your ransom,
Cush and Seba in exchange for you.

⁴Because you are precious and honored in my eyes,
and I myself love you,

I will give people in exchange for you,
and peoples in exchange for your life.

⁵Do not be afraid, because I am with you.

From the east I will bring your offspring,
and from the west I will gather you.

⁶I will say to the north, "Give them back!"
and to the south, "Do not hold them."

Bring my sons from far away
and my daughters from the end of the earth—

⁷everyone who is called by my name,
everyone I created for my glory,

everyone I formed,
yes, everyone I have made.

Psalm

121 (CW p. 112)

Refrain

**Keep me, keep me as the apple of your eye.
Hide me, hide me in the shadow of your wings.**

**I lift up my eyes to the hills.*
Where does my help come from?**

**My help comes from the LORD,*
the maker of heaven and earth.**

**He will not let your foot slip,*
he who watches over you will not slumber;
indeed, he who watches over Israel*
will neither slumber nor sleep.**

Refrain

**The LORD watches over you,*
the LORD is your shade at your right hand.**

**The LORD will keep you from all harm,*
he will watch over your life;
the LORD will watch over your coming and going*
both now and forevermore.**

**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.**

Refrain

Second Lesson

Hebrews 5:7-9 (EHV)

Because he was truly human Jesus did not relish having to suffer for our salvation. Yet he submitted to the cross out of his devoted commitment to us.

⁷In the days of his flesh, he offered prayers and pleas with loud cries and tears to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. ⁸Although he was the Son, he learned obedience from the things he suffered. ⁹After he was brought to his goal, he became the source of eternal salvation for everyone who obeys him.

Verse of the Day

(CW p.30)

For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many. (Mark 10:45)

(The Alleluias and Gospel responses are omitted during the season of Lent)

Gospel Lesson

John 12:20-33 (EHV)

Though the thought of the cross troubled his soul, Jesus was committed to glorifying his Father's name by winning eternal life for us.

²⁰Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the Festival. ²¹They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, "Sir, we want to see Jesus." ²²Philip went to tell Andrew. Andrew came with Philip and told Jesus.

²³Jesus answered them, "The time has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. ²⁴Amen, Amen, I tell you: Unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it continues to be one kernel. But if it dies, it produces much grain. ²⁵Anyone who loves his life destroys it. And the one who hates his life in this world will hold on to it for eternal life.

²⁶If anyone serves me, let him follow me. And where I am, there my servant will be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.

²⁷“Now my soul is troubled. And what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? No, this is the reason I came to this hour. ²⁸Father, glorify your name!”

A voice came from heaven: “I have glorified my name, and I will glorify it again.”

²⁹The crowd standing there heard it and said it thundered. Others said an angel talked to him. ³⁰Jesus answered, “This voice was not for my sake but for yours.

³¹“Now is the judgment of this world. Now the ruler of this world will be thrown out. ³²And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” ³³He said this to indicate what kind of death he was going to die.

Hymn

CW 122 Sing, My Tongue, the Glorious Battle

**1 Sing, my tongue, the glorious battle;
Sing the ending of the fray.
Now above the cross, the trophy,
Sound the loud triumphant lay.
Tell how Christ, the world’s Redeemer,
As a victim won the day.**

**2 Tell how, when at length the fullness
Of th’ appointed time was come,
He, the Word, was born of woman,
Left for us his Father’s home,
Blazed the path of true obedience,
Shone as light amidst the gloom.**

**3 Thus, with thirty years accomplished,
He went forth from Nazareth,
Destined, dedicated, willing,
Did his work and met his death;
Like a lamb he humbly yielded
On the cross his dying breath.**

**4 Faithful cross, true sign of triumph,
Be for all the noblest tree;
None in foliage, none in blossom,
None in fruit your equal be,
Symbol of the world's redemption,
For your burden makes us free.**

**5 Unto God be praise and glory;
To the Father and the Son,
To th' eternal Spirit honor
Now and evermore be done—
Praise and glory in the highest
While the timeless ages run.**

Sermon Text & Theme

Psalm 121 ... The LORD watches over you

- 1) Consider his power and committed love.
- 2) Trust in his protection.

A song for the ascents. ¹ I lift up my eyes to the mountains. Where does my help come from? ² My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth. ³ He will not let your foot stumble. He who watches over you will not slumber. ⁴ Yes, he who watches over Israel will not slumber. He will not sleep. ⁵ The LORD watches over you. The LORD is your shade at your right hand. ⁶ The sun will not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. ⁷ The LORD will watch to keep you from all harm. He will watch over your life. ⁸ The LORD will watch over your going and your coming from now to eternity.

Nicene Creed
(*CW p.31*)

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father.

Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, and became fully human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate.

He suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures.

He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Offertory Prayer

Prayer of the Church

(CW p.32)

M: Gracious God and Father, we praise you for the countless blessings, which we receive from your hand: the beauties of creation and the bounties of the earth, the joy of life and the pleasure of friendship, the good of work and the gift of rest, the privilege to share happiness and sorrow with one another. Above all we praise and thank you for your saving Word and for your Son's body and blood, which you give us to eat and to drink in the sacrament. Through these means of grace, you send the Holy Spirit into our hearts and unite us to Jesus and to the whole Christian Church on earth.

C: Strengthen us through this heavenly food; increase our trust in Christ and our love for one another.

M: Great God and Lord, without your continuing help we easily waver in our faith, lose courage, and grow careless in our watchfulness. The times and days are perilous. Give us strength to face the evils of each day with fresh confidence. Open our lips to speak of your grace, and move us to use the gifts that you give us to share your Word of salvation with all people. Protect and prosper the family, the school, the government, and all good institutions that you have established for the benefit of society. Remember in mercy those who are sick and suffering, and bring your healing to troubled homes and lives.

C: Move us to pray for those in need and to help them with deeds of kindness.

Special prayers and intercessions may follow.

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

Silent prayer.

M: Now, eternal God and Father, keep us in the saving faith and so enable us to overcome all things through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Lord's Prayer

(CW p.32)

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

The Sacrament

(CW p.33)

M: The Lord be with you.

C: *(sing)* **And also with you.**

M: Lift up your hearts.

C: *(sing)* **We lift them up unto the Lord.**

M: Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.

C: *(sing)* **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

M: Praise to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In love he has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. *He made his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.* Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ. To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and thanks and honor and glory for ever and ever:

C: *(sing)* **Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts.**

The whole earth is full of your glory.

You are my God, and I will exalt you.

I will give you thanks, for you have become my salvation.

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts.

The whole earth is full of your glory.

Words of Institution

M: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

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

C: *(sing)* Amen.

O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us your peace. Amen.

Distribution

Thanksgiving

(CW p.36)

C: *(sing)* Thank the Lord and sing his praise.

Tell ev'ryone what he has done.

**Let all who seek the Lord rejoice
and proudly bear his name.**

**He renews his promises and leads his people forth
in joy with shouts of thanksgiving.**

Alleluia! Alleluia!

M: Hear the prayer of your people, O Lord, that the lips which have praised you here may glorify you in the world, that the eyes which have seen the coming of your Son may long for his coming again, and that all who have received in his true body and blood the pledge of your forgiveness may be restored to live a new and holy life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: *(sing)* Amen.

Blessing

(CW p.37)

M: Brothers and sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another. Serve the Lord with gladness.

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: *(Sing)* Amen. Amen. Amen.

Hymn

“He will Hold Me Fast”

**When I fear my faith will fail, Christ will hold me fast;
When the tempter would prevail, He will hold me fast.
I could never keep my hold Through life's fearful path,
For my love is often cold - He must hold me fast.
He will hold me fast; He will hold me fast;
For my Saviour loves me so, He will hold me fast.**

**Those He saves are His delight; Christ will hold me fast;
Precious in His holy sight, He will hold me fast.
He'll not let my soul be lost; His promises shall last;
Bought by Him at such a cost, He will hold me fast.
He will hold me fast; He will hold me fast;
For my Saviour loves me so, He will hold me fast.**

**For my life He bled and died; Christ will hold me fast;
Justice has been satisfied; He will hold me fast.
Raised with Him to endless life, He will hold me fast
'Til our faith is turned to sight When He comes at last!
He will hold me fast; He will hold me fast;
For my Saviour loves me so, He will hold me fast.
He will hold me fast; He will hold me fast;
For my Saviour loves me so, He will hold me fast.**

Announcements

Week 5 of the Lenten Study Challenge:

Entering the Home Stretch

One week to go! This is your final call to grab a Tic-Tac-Toe game sheet and join the challenge. But as we all know, this is not about a game or a prize. This is an encouragement to strengthen your relationship with your Saviour. To reap the amazing blessings he has promised you through His Word. To build your confidence in what you believe, so that you can be his witnesses to the end of the earth. And you are not alone in this journey. Your Divine Word family is here to encourage you and walk with you. We're here with resources and study advice. We're here to help when you're wrestling with a question. And, of course, your Heavenly Father will be with you every step of the way.

Easter Flowers

For anyone wishing to help beautify the Easter Sunday Altar, please drop off the plant(s) of your choice to the church by 11:00 am on Saturday, March 30th. You are encouraged to take your plants home after the Easter Worship service. Any plants not taken away by the end of day on April 7th will need to be disposed of.

Church Cleaners:

March 17 – Timothy // March 24 – Mark

DIVINE WORD'S TWO-WEEK CALENDAR

Su (17) 9:00 am Sunday School and Bible Class
10:30 am Worship & Communion
3:00 pm Worship in Poltimore

Tu (19) 5:30 pm "Test the Spirits" Bible Info. Class
7:00 pm Elders Meeting

We (20) **7:00 pm Midweek Lenten Worship**

Th (21) 6:00 pm Illuminé (at St. Paul's)
6:30 pm Youth Confirmation (W)

Fr (22) 3:00 pm Online Women's Bible Study

Su (24) 9:00 am Sunday School and Bible Class
10:30 am Worship
12:00 pm Voters Meeting

Th (28) 7:00 pm Maundy Thursday (with Communion)

Fr (29) 10:30 am Good Friday (no Communion)

Su (31) 8:00 am Easter Sunrise (with Communion)
9:00 am Easter Breakfast
10:30 am Easter Late (no Communion)
3:00 pm Worship in Poltimore



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