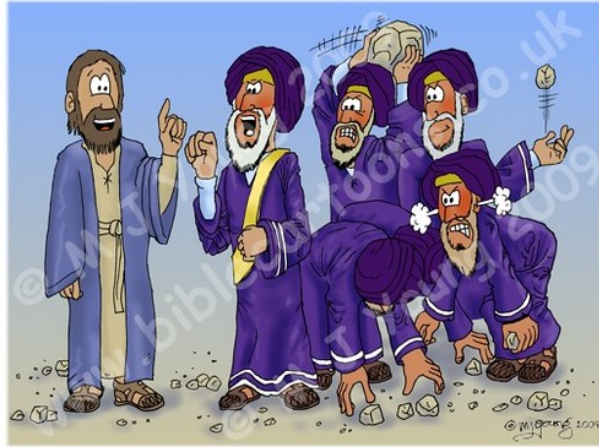


**+ Our Lenten Journey to the Cross & The Empty Tomb”
Today “Jesus, the Religious Leaders and Our Lives!”**



**+ The People of Mount Zion-Finksburg +
Third Sunday in the Season of Lent+ March 12, 2023+
Worship 9:55 a.m.**

**Wm. Louis Piel Pastor + Leslie Gabler, Director of Music
Ushers LaDonna Schemm & Eddie Wessel + Worship**

TODAY’S KEY PASSAGES OF HOLY SCRIPTURE +

+ NOTE: Today, we have placed the key Bible passages on a separate sheet in the worship bulletin. They deal with our Pastor’s message dealing with Jesus and his relationship with the Jewish religious leaders, Pharisees, Sadducees and Scribes and how it relates to us today.

Musical Prelude Let us prepare for the worship of God by listening. + God is still speaking +

Our Worship Themes

Today, Sunday March 12th Message “Jesus has to deal with the religious leaders and that isn’t easy because they want to kill him!” Implications for our lives today!”

Next Sunday, March 19th Message “Jesus has to deal with Simon Peter who is up one day and down the next” – a reflection of many of us!

Sunday March 26th Message “Jesus has to deal with the crowds who one day are with him shouting “Hosanna” and the next day “Crucify-Kill Him!”

**Congregation Singing “Worship & Song” songbook (green book) #3025
“God is Speaking”**

Call to Worship (Unison)

We gather this day as the people of God and In the name of our Creator,
who created us,
and who holds us and the whole world in his hands

We gather In the name of the Son
who came into the world to take away the darkness and bring forth light

we gather In the name of the Holy Spirit, the presence of God
who fills us with eternal life,
who links us with all Christians
and incites us to peaceful living.
we gather together to offer our thanks and praise.

Opening Prayer

Opening Hymns (1) #63 “Blessed Be the Name (sing two times)
(2) #99 “My Tribute” (“To God be the glory”)

We Welcome our Children

Even if we do not have children in congregational worship we remember all God’s children.

“The Faith We Sing” (black songbook) #2233 “This is where children belong, welcomed as part of the worshipping throng. Water, God’s Word, bread, and cup, prayer and song. This is where children belong.”

Video “We Have Come into His House & Gathered in His Name to Worship Him” (Bruce Ballinger)

Informal Moments + Reception of our Tithes & Offerings

Offering Response (Hymnal #94) “Praise God” with Alleluias

Anthem “He Grew The Tree” The Faithful Few “He mould-ed and built a small lonely hill, that He knew would be called Calvary. Then He made the seed that would grow to be thorns that would make His Son bleed.....He grew the tree that He knew could be used to make an old rugged cross. Nothing took his life, with love He gave it. He was crucified on a tree that He created.”

Message Please turn to the page “Morning Scripture Lessons” found in this worship bulletin.

Morning Prayer and our Lord's Prayer (Unison)

+ **Our Prayer Song + "People Need the Lord" (black) #2244 "The Faith We Sing"**

As darkness gives way to light
and winter sleep to fresh beginnings,
We come today as the people of God to be reminded of God's love for us.
Like the green shoots of renewed life,
stirring beneath the soil,

We welcome an awakening of God's word in our lives.

In this time of reflection and repentance,
We affirm our identity, we claim our security,

(Unison)

(Let us pray the "Our Father" together)

Our Father, which 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 that trespass against us.**

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, The power, and the glory, For ever and ever. Amen.

Message "Please turn to the page "Morning Scripture Lessons found in this worship bulletin.

Closing Lenten Hymn #297 UM Hymnal "Beneath the Cross of Jesus"

Closing Words – Sending Forth (In Unison)

This morning, we have sung, we have prayed,
we have worshiped together.

Now we go back out into the world.

We came together to build relationships, relationships with each other,
and our relationship with Jesus.

We go out as people who are strengthened by our connections
Ready to love and to serve.

Ready to carry God's love to the world.

As you journey through the ups and the downs of the coming week,
let us remember that God, who has invited us into relationship, is always with us.

Go with God, as the people of God.

So be it! Amen

We Sing Together "God be with you till we meet again, by his counsels guide uphold you. With his sheep securely fold you. God be with you till we meet again. Till we meet, till we meet. Till we meet at Jesus' feet, till we meet, till we meet. God be with you till we meet again."



++ Coming Next Sunday in Morning Worship +Next Sunday in congregational worship
our theme is "Jesus has to deal with Simon Peter who is up one day and down the next" –
a reflection of many of us! Invite a friend or family member to worship with you.



Sunday, March 12, 2023 Jesus and the Religious Leaders

1. Jesus, the Religious Leaders and the Romans

2. Matthew 23 Woe's –

Woe to you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrite -

Scholars point out that all religious leaders were not bad

3. Why? Why were the religious leaders so angry, upset (even death) about Jesus”

Jesus Broke the laws

Especially the religious (Sabbath) laws

Jesus Didn't follow the rules

Jesus Kept bad company (sinners and tax collectors)

Even picked one to be his disciple

Jesus drew the crowds – jealousy

Jesus Challenged their authority

Jesus Upset the peace (that's one that got him into trouble)

4. Jesus and the Sabbath Laws

Matthew 9.32 “A demoniac who was mute was brought to Jesus. And when Jesus had cast out the demon the one who had been mute spoke. And the crowds were amazed saying never has anything like this been seen in Israel. But the Pharisees said, by the rule of the demon he casts out demons.”

Matthew 12.1ff “ Jesus went through the grain fields on the Sabbath, his disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck heads of grain to eat. When the Pharisees, religious leaders saw it, they said to Jesus, Look. Your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath.” He said to them, Have you not read what David did when he and his companions were hungry? He entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, which its was not lawful for him or his companions to eat but only for the priests.”but the Pharisees went out and conspired against him, how to destroy him.”

Mark 3.1ff “Then Jesus said, is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the Sabbath to save life or to kill? He looked around at them with anger, he was grieved at their hardness of heart and said to the injured man, Stretch out your hand. He stretched it out and his hand was restored. The Pharisees went out and immediately conspired with the Herodian's against him, how to destroy him.”

Mark 2.27 “Then Jesus said to them, The Sabbath was made for humankind, and not humankind for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath.”

5. Hypocrisy

Matthew 23.27ff “Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites,! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which on the outside look beautiful, but inside they are full of bones of the dead, and of all kinds of filth. So you also on the outside look righteous to others, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.”

Now you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and the dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness. You fools! Did not the one who made the outside make the inside also.”

Matthew 15.7. “But Jesus said to them, you hypocrites, Isaiah the prophet prophesied rightly about you when he said, This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.” See also Mark 7.1ff.

6. Is it possible to put our faith in the wrong place?

Concern about our faith (faith in what?)

7. Jesus Taught with Authority

Mark 1.21 “They went to Capernaum and when the Sabbath came Jesus entered and taught. They were astounded at his teaching for Jesus taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes.”

Practice What You Teach (Preach)

Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, The scribes and the Pharisees sit on the Moses seat, therefore do whatever they teach you and follow it. But do not do as they do for they do not practice what they teach.

8. Luke 19.1ff Zacchaeus “Zacchaeus hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today. So he hurried down and was happy to welcome him. “All who saw it began to grumble and said, He has gone to be the guest of one who is a sinner”

Matthew 11.18 “Look a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.”

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Lenten Reading from Carroll Lutheran Village Daily Devotional Guide

Judy and Lou wrote five articles

John 8.12

“Again Jesus spoke to them, saying ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.’”

Matthew 5.14-16

Jesus said “you are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under a bushel basket, but on a lampstand and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way let your light shine before others so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.”

“What makes the difference between wishing and realizing our wishes? Lots of things, and it may take months or years for a wish to come true., but it’s far more likely to happen when you care so much about a wish that you’ll do all you can to make it happen.”

Fred Rogers

When Lou was very young, in the darkness of the night, he loved to watch the moon. The moon, you see, had a magic power of its own. It could turn itself on or off. Sometimes it only wanted to show part of itself. The most exciting thing of all, and it only happened rarely, was to turn itself completely off and vanish into the night sky. As he grew older, much to his dismay, he found out that our moon did not have power of its own. It simply reflected the light of the sun. In the scripture lesson for today, Jesus said that he was the light of the world. John’s Gospel (1.3-5) goes a step farther saying “what has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.” He goes on to add “the light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not overcome it.” As followers of Jesus you and I are called not to be the light but to reflect the light. Called to reflect the light of Christ Jesus in our lives. During this Lenten season we are challenged to see what kind of light we reflect. First, before we talk about reflecting the light we need to make sure that we don’t really believe that “we are the light.” Sometimes, even to believers we pay “lip service” to Jesus and actually believe “it’s all about me.” This is not easy to discern since it is so often imbedded in our lives. Once we have dealt with that issue we need to find out what kind of light Jesus wants us to reflect. Is it the light that breaks down walls of separation, or the love of our enemy and praying for those who persecute us, or feeding the hungry and clothing the naked, or taking the role of a peacemaker even when it may put our lives in jeopardy Is it the kind of love that forgives even when everything in us says “no,” or the kind of love that will wash feet, or love the unlovable, or fights for justice and reconciliation? How can we take seriously the “new” command of Jesus to love one another when some people are impossible to love, or his desire not so much as to get us into heaven as it is to get heaven into us? The bottom line is that we are called, no, commanded, to reflect the love of Christ Jesus in own lives. This is our Lenten challenge.

Prayer: Lord Jesus you have called me to reflect your life, your ministry, your teaching in my life every day. What you have asked of me and other followers is not easy. Some of the things you have asked of me I may honestly disagree with. But I love you Lord! When you said to me “follow me” I responded “yes, Lord, I want to follow you, but I need your Spirit not only to be with me but in my weakness, strengthen me. Amen.

Judy & Lou Piel