

# ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Helen Township, Minnesota

(Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod)

Dennis Reichow, Pastor (320) 864-3093

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**Fifth Sunday in Lent**

**April 10, 2011**

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**WELCOME:** *"May your unfailing love rest upon us, O Lord, even as we put our hope in you."* (Psalm 33:22) *Welcome to all in the name of our gracious God. May his blessings rest on you. If you are visiting with us today, we would enjoy the opportunity to get to know you. Please sign our guest book before you leave and we'd love to have you join us again!*

**Theme:** Christ has rescued us from spiritual death.

**Thoughts for a Prayer Before Worship:** Jesus is our great hope. At times in life, we find ourselves in situations where we feel totally hopeless. And Satan wants to smother us in depression. Pray that the Lord fill you with hope and strength in believing.

## SILENT PRAYER AND MEDITATION

### WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

*Order of Worship: Service of the Word (p. 38)*

**OPENING HYMN: 282** "Lord, Open Now My Heart To Hear"

**Psalm of the Day:** Psalm 116 (p. 107)

**Lesson:** Romans 8:11-19 (Pew Bible p. 1701)

The close connection between the life of the believer and the life of Christ is emphasized by Paul. Our life in Christ brings both blessing and obligation: blessing in the status of sonship graciously established by the Spirit; obligation in living as the sons of God led by the Spirit.

**Gospel:** John 11:17-27, 38-45 (Pew Bible p. 1616)

Just prior to his entry into Jerusalem, Jesus raises Lazarus to life. To the consternation of the Pharisees, the people see the miracle and

put their hope in Jesus.

**HYMN OF THE DAY: 607** "How Blest Are They"

**SERMON**

**Ezekiel 37:1-14 (Pew Bible p. 1308)**

**"I Need Hope From God"**

1. I fall out of practice looking for hope in God
2. God makes me alive in hope

**APOSTLES' CREED**

**OFFERING**

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

**LORD'S PRAYER**

**HYMN: 398** "Lord, We Confess Our Numerous Faults"

**BLESSING**

**CLOSING HYMN: 452 v 1&4** "Let Us Ever Walk With Jesus"

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**Organist:** Lesley Kaesermann

**A MEASURE OF OUR FAITHFULNESS**

*At worship, Sunday, April 3rd: 99 Wed. April 6th: 90*

*Attendance at weekly Bible Studies: 8*

**NEWSLETTERS AND FORWARD IN CHRIST** *magazines for the month of April are available. Please pick up your copy.*

**BIRTH:** *We rejoice that the Lord has blessed Bill and Emily Rabe with a baby boy. We will have even greater joy when he is brought to a new life in Christ through Holy Baptism.*

**SUMMER BIBLE SCHOOL PLANNING:** *Today after Sunday School at 11:15am we will have a short meeting to discuss Summer Bible School plans and choose the course materials.*

**WARM COAT COLLECTION:** *If you have a new or gently used coat that you would like to donate, please bring it in. We'll have a box here starting Easter Sunday and collect through May 23<sup>rd</sup>. Your generosity is appreciated.*

## THIS WEEK IF GOD WILLS

<b>Today</b>	<b>9:00 am</b>	<b>Worship</b>
	<b>10:00am</b>	<b>Sunday School</b>
	<b>10:20am</b>	<b>Bible Class</b>
	<b>11:15am</b>	<b>Summer Bible School Planning</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>7:00 pm</b>	<b>Table Talk</b>
	<b>7:00 pm</b>	<b>Chimes</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>2:00 pm</b>	<b>Worship – Mille B.</b>
	<b>5:45 pm</b>	<b>Lenten Supper</b>
	<b>7:00 pm</b>	<b>Lenten Worship</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>9:30 am</b>	<b>Senior Catechism</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>9:00 am</b>	<b>Worship</b>
	<b>10:00am</b>	<b>Sunday School</b>
	<b>10:20am</b>	<b>Bible Class</b>

**LENTEN SUPPERS:** *are served before services Wednesday from 5:45-6:45pm. Free-will donations are accepted. We appreciate your support for our church groups. Come and fill up your stomach before the service with a meal. Then stay for worship to get soup for the soul. See ya there. **Ladies Aid serves this week.***

**LEFTOVER CRAFTS:** *Check out the table downstairs with crafts left over from all of our craft fairs. Please take a look and if you see something you want, take it and leave a free will donation. If there is something on the table you donated and would like back, please just take it. Thank you for all your continued support. Any questions contact Laurie Litzau.*

### SERMON NOTES

Give examples of times when someone may lose hope in God.

I Need Hope From God

1. I fail to put my hope in God when . . .

2. God gives me hope when . . .

**SERMONS FOR THE FUTURE:** *Do you have snapshots hung up around your homes and in photo albums? Why are they special to you? Next week we will look at the Palm Sunday snapshot of Jesus and consider its importance in our lives. In preparation read, Matthew 21:1-11.*

### **The Triumphal Entry**

<sup>1</sup> As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, <sup>2</sup> saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. <sup>3</sup> If anyone says anything to you, tell him that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away.”

<sup>4</sup> This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:

<sup>5</sup> “Say to the Daughter of Zion,  
‘See, your king comes to you,  
gentle and riding on a donkey,  
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.’”

<sup>6</sup> The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. <sup>7</sup> They brought the donkey and the colt, placed their cloaks on them, and Jesus sat on them. <sup>8</sup> A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. <sup>9</sup> The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted,

“Hosanna to the Son of David!”

“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”

“Hosanna in the highest!”

<sup>10</sup> When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, “Who is this?”

<sup>11</sup> The crowds answered, “This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee.”

### **Why was nature so commonly used for Christian symbols?**



In days past—days not so long ago actually—before meadows were malls and forests were freeways, the natural world was nearby and closely observed. When believers desired pictures for religious concepts, they looked to nature for its ready bounty of symbolic meaning. Jesus himself points us to nature when he asks his followers to consider the flowers of the field and birds of the air (Matthew 6:25-30).

In the Old Testament, natural imagery was avoided because of God’s will to keep his people apart from pagans and their idolatrous customs. Remember how the golden calf, probably modeled after Egyptian gods, was an abomination to the Lord (Exodus 32). Solomon’s temple and its furnishings were decorated with images of palm trees, lilies, pomegranates, gourds, lions, and bulls, but Solomon avoided using any overtly pagan symbolism.

Early Christians often borrowed images used by pagans, sometimes mixing Christian elements with pagan, sometimes repurposing them for Christian meanings. In his epistles, the apostle Paul had to advise caution when dealing with practices that could lead some astray. The early church struggled to create its own symbolic language.

The fish is one of the earliest Christian symbols. The fish, or ichthys, became a secret sign for Christians during persecution; it survives today as a meaningful symbol for Jesus and for the Christian. In Greek, the letters for fish are the same letters that begin each word of the following phrase: “Jesus Christ God’s Son Savior.”

Many other honored Christian symbols have fallen into disuse. Flowers—lilies for the annunciation, gladiolas for the incarnation, daisies for the Christ Child’s innocence, and a rose for the nativity—are not commonly understood beyond their simple decorative appeal. It’s too bad that vines no longer adorn churches and furnishings, even as decorative motifs. In the past, carvings and pictures of vines filled the smallest of churches as a reminder of our Lord’s declaration that he is the vine and we are the branches (John 15:5).

Some other Christian symbols have fallen into disuse because they are more likely to evoke fable than spiritual truth. For example, at one time the unicorn was a common symbol for Jesus Christ, but who would understand why today? Likewise the phoenix, the peacock, and the pelican have had their symbolic meanings obscured over time, thanks in part to our growing scientific knowledge about them.

In new construction, architects and designers should consider the value of time-honored symbols from the natural world. Among other symbols, these are especially worthy: the butterfly (resurrection), the dove (peace), the fish (the Christian), fruit (the fruits of faith), the lamb (the helpless sinner), the sparrow (the lowly), palm branches (triumph over death), and trees (life).