

Different Kind of Savior

When will we return to normal? Frequently asked during these months of COVID-19, this question expresses the deep longing to commune with friends, visit loved ones in nursing care, enjoy eating together, attend social events, and resume an active life without the constraints brought on by the pandemic. We yearn to be free from the encumbrances of physical distancing.

The question of normalcy lies beneath the Gospel reading for this fifth Sunday in Lent. John 12:20-33 records the conversation Jesus had with several disciples representing folks who wanted to see Jesus. Jesus took this opportunity to educate his disciples on normal behavior for those engaged in this quest.

“The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified” (v. 23). With those words, Jesus gave voice to the deepest longings of the Hebrew people. To be glorified—elevated and exalted—was to become the longed-for One who would free the people, who had the power and might to conquer the Roman legions, whose glory would be revealed in God’s triumph over Israel’s foes.

The disappointment and shock must have been severe, for Jesus described a different kind of kingdom and a different Savior. The kingdom would be brought in by those willing to lay down their lives, by those willing to give up their claims to grandeur, by those willing to follow and serve Jesus. Jesus would conquer the powers that his followers encountered, not with the glorious power of a conquering hero, but the humiliating ignominy of death on a cross.

So, what is expected of those who wish to see Jesus?

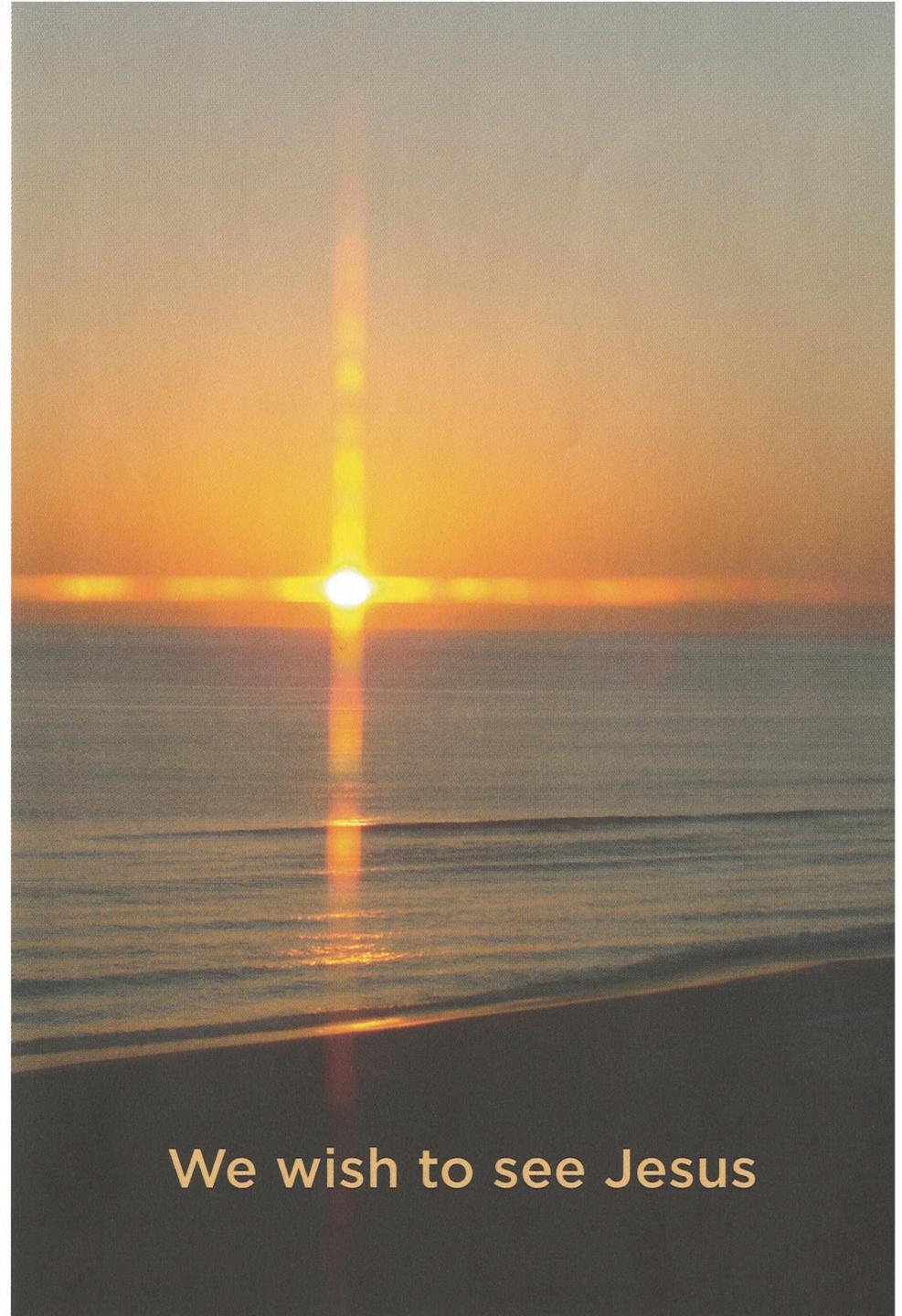
- Those of us who wish to see Jesus must be willing to lay down our lives instead of insisting on our rights.
- Those of us who wish to see Jesus must be willing to pledge our loyalty to Jesus above all other loyalties.
- Those of us who wish to see Jesus must be willing to let God’s approval be enough.

Lord, give us the courage to seek and to see.

—John Jantzi
Weyers Cave, Virginia

Text for today: “Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, ‘Sir, *we wish to see Jesus.*’ Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus” (John 12:20-22, *NRSV*). **Bible readings for today:** Jeremiah 31:31-34; Psalm 51:1-12 or 119:9-16; Hebrews 5:5-10; John 12:20-33 (21).

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We wish to see Jesus

CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN
Hagerstown, Maryland

MORNING WORSHIP

10:00 AM

Worship March 21, 2021

Fifth Sunday in Lent

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE "Lenten Prayer" (Johnston)

***CALL TO WORSHIP** Brenda Shane, Worship Leader

One: Lord God, we have gathered here in your Spirit,
All: With hearts hungry from our Lenten journey.
One: In the midst of our wilderness travels,
we yearn for holy refreshment,
All: Through your loving and healing Spirit.
One: We yearn now in our time together to experience you,
All: In fresh, new and abundant ways.
One: Prepare us now for this time of worship,
**All: And may the power and promise of our
Lord Jesus Christ be with us.**

***OPENING PRAYER**

Dear Lord, as we draw closer to the cross of Good Friday, give to us an awareness of our sin. Remind us that we have not always been the people you have called us to be. May your fresh and generous Spirit flow over us as we grow in newness in Jesus Christ. Amen.

***HYMN #5** "There is a place of quiet rest"

[Verse 1]

*There is a place of quiet rest, near to the heart of God,
a place where sin cannot molest, near to the heart of God.*

[Refrain]

*O Jesus, bless'd Redeemer, sent from the heart of God, hold us,
who wait before Thee, near to the heart of God.*

[Verse 2]

*There is a place of comfort sweet, near to the heart of God,
a place where we our Savior meet, near to the heart of God.*

(continued)

[Refrain]

*O Jesus, bless'd Redeemer, sent from the heart of God, hold us,
who wait before Thee, near to the heart of God.*

[Verse 3]

*There is a place of full release, near to the heart of God,
a place where all is joy and peace, near to the heart of God.*

[Refrain]

*O Jesus, bless'd Redeemer, sent from the heart of God, hold us,
who wait before Thee, near to the heart of God.*

A MOMENT TO BECOME LIKE CHILDREN

SERVICE OF GIVING

Call to Giving

The One who writes the law of love on our hearts, the One who saves us from the worst parts of ourselves, is here to bless us once more. In giving we receive; in loving we find love bestowed upon us. In the spirit of Christian love, let us show our care for one another as we offer what we have and who we are to God.

As you listen to the offertory, you can use this time to prepare your offering to mail into the church, or to drop off at the church, or to go to the HCOB webpage and use PayPal to give your offering. May we give joyfully as we participate in this significant act of worship.

Offertory "I Bind My Heart to Thee" (Ritter)

***Doxology #119** "Praise God from whom"

***Prayer of Thanksgiving**

Let us pray. Nurturing God, with hearts washed clean and spirits made new, we celebrate the joy of your salvation. Bless our offerings this day, that they may bear much fruit in the lives of those who need it most. Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC

"Jesus Paid It All"

(Hall)

Diana Shepherd, soloist

SHARING OUR JOYS, CONCERNS, AND HOPES

Please remember our worship is also on Facebook Live and our website.

Please do not share any personal information you do not want public.

The usher will hold the microphone for you while you share.

(continued)

RESPONSIVE READING OF PSALM 51:1-12

All: Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.

One: For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge.

All: Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me. Yet you desired faithfulness even in the womb; you taught me wisdom in that secret place.

One: Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice. Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity.

All: Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

SCRIPTURE READING

Jeremiah 31:31-34

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. 32 It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. 33 But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

34 No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the Lord,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

(continued)

MESSAGE

“Written on Our Hearts”

Pastor Twyla Rowe

***HYMN #521**

“Come thou fount”

[Verse 1]

*Come, thou fount of ev'ry blessing, tune my heart to sing thy grace.
Streams of mercy, never ceasing, call for songs of loudest praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet, sung by flaming tongues above.
Praise the mount, I'm fixed upon it, mount of God's unchanging love.*

[Verse 2]

*Here I raise mine Ebenezer; hither by thy help I'm come, and I hope,
by thy good pleasure, safely to arrive at home. Jesus sought me when
a stranger, wand'ring from the fold of God. He, to rescue me from danger,
interposed his precious blood.*

[Verse 3]

*Oh, to grace how great a debtor daily I'm constrained to be! Let that grace now,
like a fetter, bind my wand'ring heart to thee. Prone to wander,
Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love. Here's my heart,
O take and seal it, seal it for thy courts above.*

***BENEDICTION**

*After the Benediction, you may be seated. Please continue
in a spirit of worship as we listen to the Postlude music.*

***POSTLUDE**

“Awake, Thou Wintry Earth”

(Smith)

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\*Please rise — in body or spirit — as an act of worship  
Thank you for joining us in worship today.

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