

Sermon followed by Service

May 7, 2023

John 14:1-11

Imagine with me the vacation of your hopes and dreams. Are you imagining beaches or mountains, or both? Now imagine with me the house of your hopes and dreams - is it a mansion or an RV? Imagine the job of your hopes and dreams, with the perfect boss. Now imagine, for years you've been hoping and dreaming. For years, you've been all in, living, giving, sacrificing to make your hopes and dreams come true. And now, it's time. You're in the airport VIP lounge; you're in the realtor's office; it looks like your new boss is about to shake your hand. Finally, after years of hoping and dreaming, living, giving, sacrificing your all, it's time for your hopes and dreams to come true.

Except it isn't. Those hopes and dreams you've had, they aren't coming true. That dream vacation, that dream house, that dream job - they aren't going to happen. As you feel your hopes and dreams coming apart, as you're trying to figure it all out, you hear something that sounds - I don't know - like or let-down or like something too good to be true. Your travel agent offers you a better vacation than you could have ever hoped for, everything included, free! The realtor offers you a better home than you could have ever hoped for, a mansion, fully furnished with everything you could need, and a garage big enough for your new RV. And instead of that job that just fell through, you are offered an even better job, better than you could have ever hoped for. At the same time your hopes and dreams are falling apart, you are

promised the best life ever. With all that - your hopes and dreams crashing; a bigger, better promise and life in front of you - what's going through your mind? Are you ready to leave behind your hopes and dreams just like that? Are you ready to jump on the new promise, just like that?

Maybe that's why Jesus is so patient in our lesson. It's Maundy Thursday night, oops! It's Holy Thursday night, just days after Palm Sunday. Just days after "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" The disciples started the week riding high on expectations. Now, after a week on edge, the disciples know that something big is about to happen. They seem to be expecting something big, that somehow Jesus is going to usher in his new kingdom, and life is going to get good, very good. But the more that Jesus talks about glory, the more Jesus tells them that life is about to get hard, very hard. Soon, very soon, one of them would betray him. Soon, very soon, Jesus would be going where they couldn't yet go. That night Peter would deny him. Can you feel the disciples' hopes and dreams coming apart? Can you feel the angst in the room?

Jesus could. And so Jesus speaks to their hearts: "**Do not let your hearts be troubled.**" That's more than just, "Don't worry." There's a whole lot more turmoil going on in the room than just worry. So "**Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, trust also in me.**" Even if they weren't sure about Jesus and what Jesus was saying, they could still trust in God. And because they could trust in God, Jesus is telling them, they could trust in him.

And then Jesus does what he and the Father and his Spirit have done throughout the Bible - when life for God's people gets hard, when life is disappointing, God gives us a promise to pick us up and hold us together. And Jesus knew exactly the promise to share. Jesus knew the angst in the room; not just because he felt his disciples' angst, but because he could feel the turmoil in his own heart. The thought of Judas betraying him, Peter denying him, his Father cursing him, crushing him, crossing him with the guilt of the world and the judgment of hell - it was all tearing at Jesus. Through it all, Jesus knew what kept him going - the promise of heaven, the promise of heaven together with his disciples around him, the promise of heaven together with God and his church. What kept Jesus together was the promise of heaven together with you and me.

So what promise did Jesus give his disciples? Much the same promise that kept him going. **“In my Father's house are many rooms [many mansions]; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.”** The promise that kept Jesus going to the cross and through the cross to heaven is the promise that Jesus gave to his disciples. It's the promise that Jesus has given to you and to me!

That's right - Jesus gives his disciples one of our most favorite promises ever. And what do the disciples do? They don't know what to think or say. After all that Jesus has taught his disciples, Thomas still said: **“We don't know where you are going.”** After all that Jesus had shown his disciples, Philip still says, **“It would be enough if you would just show us the**

Father.” It’s kind of like Jesus serving up the best, most tender, juicy, tasty steak, and Thomas asks: “Where’s the ketchup?” Jesus offers up the best, most tender, juicy tasty steak, and Philip says: “McDonalds would be fine.” What? Don’t you get what Jesus just promised you? We wouldn’t do that, would we?

We do do that, don’t we? In the midst of our worst days ever, Jesus offers us the best promise of heaven forever, but instead of wowing at what Jesus has for us, we pick at what Jesus says: “What? How’s that going to work?” Jesus offers us the best of heaven forever, but instead of grabbing hold of that promise, we ask for something far smaller, just a little pick-me-up for right here, right now.

We can get so stuck on what we want that we overlook and belittle what God has for us. We can get so stuck on our plans that we miss what God is promising us.

It’s amazing how patient Jesus was and is. He could have pulled his promise off the table - “Don’t like what I’m offering, I’ll give it to someone else.” “All you can do is pick at what I say? You can’t be bothered to remember what I’ve said again and again? I’ll find someone who will appreciate and hold on to what I say.” Jesus could have said: “You don’t like the way I do things, fine then.” Jesus could have laid that on his disciples; he could lay that down on us. Instead he is so patient.

Again and again, he points us to his cross - “Your doubt, your picking at my promises, your forgetfulness, it’s all forgiven. Your damn pride that thinks you know better than I do - it’s all

forgiven. Your petty hopes and dreams that you hold as more precious than all the treasures of heaven - they're all forgiven. You're all forgiven." Forgiven - that's not just a word for Jesus. It's his heart for you eager to share his hope and promise with you.

What does that mean for us? What does that mean when our troubles have us all bent out of shape? What does it mean for us when our troubles have us all forgetful? Jesus, instead of rolling his eyes at us, he shares his promise, the promise that got him through his turmoil and trouble: **"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am."**

When life in this world is churning all around you, when life in this world is churning inside you, when life is disappointing you, when you think that God is disappointing you, take hold of his promise - Jesus has a life for you better than you could ever imagine. Jesus has a place for you in heaven. Jesus has a place for you with him. Amen.

May 6 & 7, 2023

DIVINE SERVICE II

IN OUR WORLD TODAY ... (and even in his church) you may sense a great dissatisfaction with Jesus.

IN OUR WORSHIP TODAY ... Jesus addresses his disciples' apprehension, fear, and dissatisfaction and blesses us with promises we hold as favorite!

OPENING HYMN

"My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less"

Hymn 563

My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
I dare to make no other claim, but wholly lean on Jesus' name.
On Christ, the solid rock, I stand; all other ground is sinking sand.

When darkness veils his lovely face, I rest on his unchanging grace;
in ev'ry high and stormy gale my anchor holds within the veil.
On Christ, the solid rock, I stand; all other ground is sinking sand.

His oath, his covenant and blood support me in the raging flood;
when ev'ry earthly prop gives way, he then is all my hope and stay. On
Christ, the solid rock, I stand; all other ground is sinking sand.

When he shall come with trumpet sound, oh, may I then in him be found,
clothed in his righteousness alone, faultless to stand before his throne. On
Christ, the solid rock, I stand; all other ground is sinking sand.

INVOCATION

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

C: **Amen.**

CONFESSION

M: Dear friends, let us approach God with a true heart and confess our sins, asking him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to forgive us.

**C: Lord of life, I confess that I am by nature dead in sin.
For faithless worrying and selfish pride,
For sins of habit and sins of choice,
For the evil I have done and the good I have failed to do,
I deserve to be cast away from your presence forever.
O Lord, I am sorry for my sins. Forgive me, for Jesus' sake.**

ABSOLUTION

M: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again. In his great mercy, God made us alive in Christ even when we were dead in our sins. Hear the word of Christ through his called servant: I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

LORD, HAVE MERCY (*Kyrie*)

M: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

For the well-being of all people everywhere, that they may receive from you all they need to sustain body and life, hear our prayer, O Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

M: For the spread of your life-giving gospel throughout the world, that all who are lost in sin may be brought to faith in you, hear our prayer, O Christ.

C: Christ, have mercy.

M: For patience and perseverance in this life, that we may not lose the hope of heaven as we await your return, hear our prayer, O Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

M: Lord of life, live in us that we may live for you.

C: Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God, you form the minds of your faithful people into a single will. Make us love what you command and desire what you promise, that among the many changes of this world, our hearts may ever yearn for the lasting joys of heaven; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

FIRST READING

1 Peter 2:4–10

As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him— you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For in Scripture it says:

“See, I lay a stone in Zion,
a chosen and precious cornerstone,
and the one who trusts in him
will never be put to shame.”

Now to you who believe, this stone is precious.

But to those who do not believe,

“The stone the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone,”

and,

“A stone that causes people to stumble
and a rock that makes them fall.”

They stumble because they disobey the message—which is also what they were destined for.

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM OF THE DAY

Psalm 118A

Refrain



This is the day the LORD has made, let us re-joice and be glad!



This is the day the LORD has made, let us re-joice and be glad!

Tone



The LORD is my strength and / my defense;
he has become my sal- / vation.

The LORD's right hand is / lifted high;
the LORD's right hand has done / mighty things!

I will not / die but live,
and will proclaim what the / LORD has done. *Refrain*

I will give you thanks, for you / answered me;
you have become my sal- / vation.

The stone the builders re- / jected
has become the / cornerstone;
the LORD has / done this,
and it is marvelous / in our eyes.

**Glory be to the Father and / to the Son
and to the Holy / Spirit,
as it was in the be- / ginning,
is now, and will be forever. / Amen. *Refrain***

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia. I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. Alleluia.

GOSPEL

John 14:1–11

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going.”

Thomas said to him, “Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?”

Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.”

Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.”

Jesus answered: “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

HYMN OF THE DAY

“Do Not Let Your Hearts Be Troubled”

Hymn 809

Refrain

Do not let your hearts be troubled; have faith in God and faith in me.
I will go forth to prepare a place for you;
then I'll come back to take you with me, that where I am, you may also be.

In God's house there are many places for you to dwell in peace and safety.
You know the way to where I'll lead you;
if you are lost, I will show the way. *Refrain*

I am the way, the truth, and the life;
only through me can you know what I know.
If you knew me, you would know the Father;
if you see me, you see your God. *Refrain*

The words I speak are not only of myself;
it is your God who lives within me.
If you believe that your God and I are one,
I will provide when you call my name. *Refrain*

SERMON

John 14:1-11

NICENE CREED

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 truly 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.

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

Let us pray, brothers and sisters, for the holy Church of God throughout the world, that God the almighty Father gather and guide it so that we may worship him in peace and tranquility:

Almighty and eternal God, you have shown your glory to all nations in Jesus Christ. Guide the work of the Church. Help it to persevere in faith, proclaim your Word, and bring salvation to people everywhere. Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Let us pray for our pastors and teachers and all leaders of the Church, and for all the people of God:

Almighty and eternal God, your Spirit guides the Church and makes it holy.

Strengthen and uphold all who serve you and your people. Keep them in health and safety for the good of the Church. Help each of us to do faithfully the work to which you have called us. Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Let us pray for those who do not believe in Christ, that the light of the Holy Spirit may show them the way to salvation:

Almighty and eternal god, enable those who do not acknowledge Christ to receive the truth of the gospel. Help us, your Church, to grow in love for you and for one another, so that we become more perfect witnesses of your love for all people. Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Let us pray for those who serve in public office, that God may guide their minds and hearts, so that all of us may live in true peace and freedom:

Almighty and eternal God, graciously direct those who have been set in positions of authority among us, so that people everywhere may enjoy justice, peace, freedom, and a share in the goodness of your creation. Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Let us pray that God, the almighty and merciful Father, may heal the sick, comfort the dying, give safety to travelers, and free those unjustly deprived of liberty:

Almighty and eternal God, you give strength to the weary and new courage to those who have lost heart. In your mercy hear the prayers of all who call on you in any trouble, that they may have the joy of receiving your help in their need. We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

THE SACRAMENT

(Guests, please see our communion practice on page 2.)

(Gluten-free wafers are available; ask Pastor.)

M: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

M: Lift up your hearts.

C: **We lift them up unto the Lord.**

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

C: **It is good and right so to do.**

M: It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who rose from the dead in glorious triumph to bring forgiveness to the world and everlasting life to all who believe.

Therefore with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY *Sanctus*

O holy, holy, holy
Lord God of pow'r and might,
Your glory, earth and heaven
In countless ways recite.
Hosanna! Come and save us,
Lord God of hosts on high,
And in your grace and mercy
Receive our fervent cry.

Hosanna in the highest!
How truly blest is he
Who in God's name is coming
To set his people free!
He comes to bring salvation
And with his blood outpoured,
Deliver us from bondage—
Hosanna, mighty Lord!

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Lord God, you are worthy to receive thanks and praise from all people. You created the world and all who live in it, and in your mercy you saved us. We give thanks to you for the grace of your Son, Jesus Christ.

Though in very nature God, he took the nature of a servant and became obedient to death, even death on a cross. He offered himself as a sacrifice for sin and redeemed us from its curse and penalty. He rescued us from the terrors of death and restored eternal life with you. He conquered our enemies and gained for us the kingdom of grace and glory.

Bless us as we receive your Son's body and blood, and lead us to remember his suffering, death, and resurrection. Forgive our sins and fill us with the hope of new life in heaven. Hear our praise and receive our thanks as we worship you—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

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.

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: **Amen.**

LAMB OF GOD *Agnus Dei*

Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.
Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the

world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God,
 you take a - way the sin of the world;
 grant us your peace. A - men.

CHOIR

“There Is Power In The Blood”

*Would you be free from the burden of sin?
 There’s power in the blood, power in the blood
 Would you o’er evil a victory win?
 There’s wonderful power in the blood*

Refrain

*There is power, power, wonder-working power
 In the blood of the Lamb
 There is power, power, wonder-working power
 In the precious blood of the Lamb*

*Would you be free from your passion and pride
 There’s power in the blood, power in the blood
 Come for a cleansing to Calvary’s tide
 There’s wonderful power in the blood*

Refrain

*Would you be whiter,
 much whiter than snow?
 There’s power in the blood, power in the blood
 Sin stains are lost in its life-giving flow
 There’s wonderful power in the blood*

Refrain

*Would you do service for Jesus you King?
There's power in the blood, power in the blood
Would you live daily His praises to sing?
There's wonderful power in the blood
Refrain*

CLOSING PRAYER

M: We give you thanks, O Lord, for the foretaste of the heavenly banquet that you have given us to eat and to drink in this sacrament. Through this gift you have fed our faith, nourished our hope, and strengthened our love. By your Spirit help us to live as your holy people until that day when you will receive us as your guests at the wedding supper of the Lamb, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

BLESSING

M: 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. **Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN

"On Christ's Ascension I Now Build"
Hymn 476

On Christ's ascension I now build the hope of my ascension.
This hope alone has always stilled all doubt and apprehension,
for where the head is, there as well I know his members are to dwell
when Christ shall come and call them.

Since Christ returned to claim his throne, great gifts for me obtaining,
my heart will rest in him alone, no other rest remaining,
for where my treasure went before, there all my thoughts will ever soar
to still their deepest yearning.

O grant, dear Lord, this grace to me, recalling your ascension,
that I may serve you faithfully, in thanks for my redemption;
and then, when all my days will cease, let me depart in joy and peace
in answer to my pleading.

OFFERING

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Light for the People!

We have been fast-fluttered, slow-blinked, and dimmed into darkness. We have been distracted: "What's going on with the lights?" Some of us have been migrained.

Some of you have asked, "What can we do?" Some of you have said, "We need to do something." And some of you have done something, giving \$10,000+ for a church light retrofit project.

We have an electrical contractor, Krause Electrical Contractors (KEC), with Vanderwerff Construction overseeing as General Contractor, and a path forward to bring down our nave and balcony pendant lights, retrofit them with LED panel lights, and set them back up to light up our worship.

If all goes smoothly, our project should be just under \$40,000. We already have just over \$10,000. And we have approved matching funds for this project. To help shine light on our worship, you may use the Special Offering envelopes in the pew (designate - "Church Lighting").

News from Shoreland

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF SERVICE

Join Shoreland in recognizing **Mr. Corey Schmidt & Mr. James Groth for 25 years in the teaching ministry**. Both Mr. Schmidt & Mr. Groth will be honored at our annual end of year concert on **May 19 at 7:00 p.m.** with a reception to follow. Cards of congratulations can be sent in care of Shoreland at 9026 12th Street, Kenosha, WI 53144.

2023 POPS CONCERT

Join us for our 2023 Pops Concert featuring performances by Shoreland's Concert Band, Handbells, Chamber Orchestra, Concert Choir and Chamber Choir. This free concert begins at **7:00 p.m. on Friday, May 19** and is open to the public. We hope to see you there, but if you are unable to attend you can stream the concert online at slhs.us.

SHORELAND SHOWCASE NIGHT

Mark **Saturday, May 20, at 5:00 p.m.** on your calendar to see work of Shoreland's STEM Academy and Visual Arts students. This event is free and open to the public.

2023 PACER OPEN

Check out the 37th Annual Pacer Open Golf Outing - **July 7, 2023** (with a rain date of July 14) at www.slpacers.org (click on the "Pacer Open" tab for more information and to register). All proceeds from this event benefit Shoreland Lutheran athletics. If you don't golf, you can still support our athletic programs by attending the Pacer Social dinner/auction. The Pacer Social is held in the commons area of the high school starting at 3:00 p.m. the day of the golf outing.