

They didn't want to believe it. He was a cripple, more than 40 years old and never walked a step. A cripple for more than 40 years and there he was ... one moment on the temple floor begging, and then one of those Jesus-followers says: "**In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.**" And just like that, that cripple was jumping up and walking, jumping around and praising God. They didn't want to believe it. But what was worse than that miracle was this - those Jesus-followers were talking as if Jesus were alive. Those Jesus-followers were claiming that the crucified and dead Jesus had raised himself back to life, and that with Jesus we can rise from the dead.

They didn't want to believe it. "Just let death be the end. Don't make me think about having to face God, having to answer to God. Just let me do what I want. Let me live for today. Don't bother me with thinking there might be something after this life. Don't bother me with thinking I should have to answer to God. I don't want to go there. So don't tell me about Jesus rising from the dead. Don't tell me about life after death. I don't want to believe it. I don't even want to think about it. I just want to do what I want now." That's what they wanted to believe.

But those Jesus-followers, they kept on talking like Jesus is alive. And the people ... hundreds of people, thousands of people were actually believing what these Jesus-followers were saying. The great thinkers, the news-makers of the day couldn't believe it. It didn't fit with what they wanted to hear. It had to be stopped. It was stirring up the people; it was stirring their own consciences in ways they didn't like. Those followers of Jesus had to be silenced.

So they shut them up ... in a jail cell. Or, I should say, they tried to shut them up. The next day the high priests and rulers, the elders and teachers of the law - the powers that be - had them outnumbered and they were going to get their way. They wouldn't have to hear any more from those Jesus-people. They would put those Jesus-followers in their place - "**By what power or what name do you do this?** Who do you think you are to say these things?"

Sound familiar? For thousands of years, Jesus' followers have been sharing the good news of life in Jesus. For thousands of years, followers of Jesus have been sharing God's way of life, but we still hear voices who want to silence us. "Who are you to talk to us about marriage, who we marry, when we marry, if we marry?" Or "who are you to say that Jesus is the only way to be saved, that Jesus is the only way to be right with God?" Or "who are you to say that I should come to church? I'll get there when I get there." "Who are you to say 'it's not my time, my money, my life to do with as I please'?"

It's not just voices out there that try to silence the church, is it? We don't always like to admit: there is a God more important than our thinking or our feelings. We don't always like to have our conscience pricked. We don't always like to think of having to answer to God. The voices that want to silence Christ and his church aren't just out there; they echo in and out of our hearts. May God have mercy on us!

Like Peter and John and followers of Jesus for thousands of years, we live in a world that wants Jesus and his church silenced. And some days, those voices wanting Christ and his church silenced seem to be winning. But on that day in Jerusalem, Christ and his church were not about to be silenced. When the enemies of Christ demanded: "Who are you ... in whose name do you do these things?" Peter would not be bullied into silence. Filled with the Spirit, Peter pointed to Jesus.

Then Peter said something so many in this world hate to hear: **"Salvation is found in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."** Most of the world today refuses to believe it. Most of Christianity today refuses to repeat it. But instead of silencing Christ ... instead of silencing ourselves, we love to hear it ... we love to share it! Instead of being shut out by God, God has given us a Savior! Instead of having to face God and answer to God with no good answer, God has given us the answer, the key to life made right - he has given us Jesus! Instead of shutting his ears to us, he hears our cry: "Lord, have mercy on me. Lord, for those times I've tried to shut you up, for those time I've tried to silence your church, for those times I've been too weak, too insecure, too selfish, too much myself to speak the word of Jesus - Lord, have mercy." Yes, with Jesus, God hears our cry for mercy and he is not silent.

With Jesus, he speaks to you and he speaks through you: there is a way to life made right with God, and that way is Jesus. With Jesus, we get to hear God say: “Peace, your sins are forgiven! Paid for at the cross, washed away in the blood of Jesus.” With Jesus, we are saved from having to live a life of denial, trying to silence Christ and his church so we can feel right about ourselves - with Jesus, we are set right and called right by God! With Jesus we don’t have to pretend or hope that life is a dead-end with death. With Jesus, we get to look forward to something more than death. With Jesus, God has saved you for life!

Sounds good, doesn’t it? So listen to this! God has saved you to hear, and God has saved you to be heard! You are alive with the Christ who won’t be silenced. He will be heard! What does that mean? You get to hear: **“Come to me all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest. Peace, your sins are forgiven you. Well done, good and faithful servant. Come, and share your master’s happiness. Take your place with God and hear what he has to say: ‘You are my son, you are my daughter whom I love; with you I am well-pleased!’”** And what does that mean for us? We get to look forward to a life with God where we won’t be silenced, but we will sing and shout; you will sing and shout with the saints and the angels forever. With Jesus, you get to live a promise that will not be silenced because Christ and his church will not be silenced.

Not every one wants to believe that. Not everyone wants to hear what God has to say. In Jerusalem, the powers-that-be tried to silence Christ. They killed him, but he rose back to life. In

Jerusalem, the powers-that-be tried to silence Christ's church. They tried to bully Peter and John into silence. But Peter and John would not be silenced. They could not be silenced. They were outnumbered, but they were not over-powered. Instead of being silenced, they spoke up: **“Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight to keep silent. For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.”**

Today, in us and around us, the powers of evil still try to silence Christ and his church. But we don't need to let them silence us. We have the same Spirit who filled Peter and John. We have the same Christ alive with us. We have the same life, the same Christ to share. It doesn't matter who tries to silence him. Christ will have his say. May God bless us to hear him and to share him! Amen.

NEW MORNING PRAISE

IN OUR WORLD TODAY ... the powers of this world seek to silence Christ's church as out-of-date, intolerant, irrelevant. We aren't facing something new, this has been Satan's way to subvert Christ's church throughout the ages.

IN OUR WORSHIP TODAY ... we see that the Spirit-filled Church perseveres! The Spirit-filled Church won't be silenced! This week, part one – the Spirit-filled Church speaks up!

OPENING HYMN – SEE LAST PAGE

“God, We Praise You”
Hymn 971

OPENING SENTENCES – SUNG

O Lord, open my lips.

And my mouth shall declare your praise.

Hasten to save me, O God.

O Lord, come quickly to help me.

CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION OF SINS

M: We have come into the presence of God, who created us to love and serve him as his dear children. But we have disobeyed him and deserve only his wrath and punishment. Therefore, let us confess our sins to him and plead for his mercy.

C: Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against you and do not deserve to be called your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray: Have mercy on me according to your unfailing love. Cleanse me from my sin, and take away my guilt.

M: God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, he has removed your guilt forever. You are his own dear child. May God give you strength to live according to his will. **Amen.**

Give glory to God, our light and our life.
Come, O come, let us worship.

COME, O COME, LET US SING TO THE LORD - SUNG

Refrain

Come, O come, let us sing to the Lord,
let us shout with joy to our saving Rock;
come, enter in with our songs of praise, come, enter in with thanksgiving.

You are a great and a wondrous God,
cupping in your hands all the depths of earth.
You made the hills and the mountains high,
you made the seas and the dry land. *Refrain*

Come, let us worship and, bowing low,
kneel before the One who has made us all.
You are the God whom we call our own,
we are the flock that you shepherd. *Refrain*

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, in your bountiful goodness keep us safe from every evil of body and soul. Make us ready, with cheerful hearts, to do whatever pleases you; through Jesus Christ, you Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

FIRST READING

Acts 4:1-4

The priests and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees came up to Peter and John while they were speaking to the people. They were greatly disturbed because the apostles were teaching the people, proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead. They seized Peter and John and, because it was evening, they put them in jail until the next day. But many who heard the message believed; so the number of men who believed grew to about five thousand.

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***

The next day the rulers, the elders and the teachers of the law met in Jerusalem. Annas the high priest was there, and so were Caiaphas, John, Alexander and others of the high priest's family. They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them: "By what power or what name did you do this?"

Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: "Rulers and elders of the people! If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a man who was lame and are being asked how he was healed, then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. Jesus is

“ ‘the stone you builders rejected,
which has become the cornerstone.’

Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.”

When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus. But since they could see the man who had been healed standing there with them, there was nothing they could say. So they ordered them to withdraw from the Sanhedrin and then conferred together. "What are we going to do with these men?" they asked.

"Everyone living in Jerusalem knows they have performed a notable sign, and we cannot deny it. But to stop this thing from spreading any further among the people, we must warn them to speak no longer to anyone in this name."

Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John replied, "Which is right in God's eyes: to listen to you, or to him? You be the judges! As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard."

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

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Mark 12:10b-11

Alleluia. "The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes!" Alleluia.

GOSPEL

Luke 20:9-19

He went on to tell the people this parable: "A man planted a vineyard, rented it to some farmers and went away for a long time. At harvest time he sent a servant to the tenants so they would give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the tenants beat him and sent him away empty-handed. He sent another servant, but that one also they beat and treated shamefully and sent away empty-handed. He sent still a third, and they wounded him and threw him out.

"Then the owner of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I will send my son, whom I love; perhaps they will respect him.'

"But when the tenants saw him, they talked the matter over. 'This is the heir,' they said. 'Let's kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.' So they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

"What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them? He will come and kill those tenants and give the vineyard to others."

When the people heard this, they said, "God forbid!"

Jesus looked directly at them and asked, "Then what is the meaning of that which is written:

" 'The stone the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone'?"

Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces; anyone on whom it falls will be crushed."

The teachers of the law and the chief priests looked for a way to arrest him immediately, because they knew he had spoken this parable against them. But they were afraid of the people.

C: Come, Holy Spirit! Fill the hearts of your faithful people, and kindle in us the fire of your love. Alleluia!

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

HYMN

"A Mighty Fortress Is Our God"

Hymn 863

A mighty fortress is our God, a trusty shield and weapon;
he helps us free from ev'ry need that has us now o'ertaken.
The old evil foe now means deadly woe; deep guile and great might
are his dread arms in fight; on earth is not his equal.

With might of ours can naught be done, soon were our loss effected;
but for us fights the valiant one whom God himself elected.
You ask, "Who is this?" Jesus Christ it is, the almighty Lord,
and there's no other God; he holds the field forever.

Though devils all the world should fill, all eager to devour us,
we tremble not, we fear no ill; they shall not overpow'r us.
This world's prince may still scowl fierce as he will, he can harm us none.
He's judged; the deed is done; one little word can fell him.

The Word they still shall let remain nor any thanks have for it;
he's by our side upon the plain with his good gifts and Spirit.
And take they our life, goods, fame, child, and wife,
though all may be gone, our victory is won; the kingdom's ours forever!

HYMN

“O Christ, Who Called the Twelve”
Hymn 716

O Christ, who called the Twelve to rise and follow you,
forsaking old, familiar ways for ventures bold and new:
grant us to hear your call to risk security
and, bound in heart and will to you, find perfect liberty.

O Christ, who taught the Twelve the truth for ages sealed,
whose words and works awakened faith, the ways of God revealed:
instruct us now, we pray, by your empow’ring Word.
True teacher, be for all who seek their light, their life, their Lord.

O Christ, who sent the Twelve on roads they’d never trod
to serve, to suffer, teach, proclaim the nearer reign of God:
send us on ways where faith transcends timidity,
where love informs and hope sustains both life and ministry.

O Christ, th’_apostles’ Lord, the martyrs’ strength and song,
the crucified and risen King to whom the saints belong:
though generations pass, our tribute still we bring,
our hymns a sacrifice of praise, our lives an offering.

OFFERING

If you prefer to give online, the code at the right will take you to our Online Giving page. We invite our online givers to join in our offering with an “I Give Online” card in the pew racks.



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Charles Ledvina*

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Lee Schaperow**

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Worship Elder	Tim Kalter*
Adult Ministry Elder	/
Congregation Treasurer	/
School Board Chairman	Greg Haak**
School Finance	Lee Rockwell
School Recruitment	Tyler Jorgensen**
Parent Relations	Jack Villiard

* Elected to a new term / ** Newly elected

PRAYER AND 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.

M: O Lord, our heavenly Father, almighty and everlasting God, you have brought us safely to this new day. Defend us with your mighty power, and grant that this day we neither fall into sin nor run into any kind of danger; and in all we do, direct us to what is right in your sight, through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. **Amen.**

BLESSING - SUNG

The Lord bless and keep you.
Amen.

The Lord's face ever shine upon you.
Amen.

The Lord grant you peace for all your days.
Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

“Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus”

Hymn 872

Stand up, stand up for Jesus, ye soldiers of the cross;
lift high his royal banner, it must not suffer loss.
From vict'ry unto vict'ry his army shall he lead
till ev'ry foe is vanquished and Christ is Lord indeed.

Stand up, stand up for Jesus, the trumpet call obey;
forth to the mighty conflict in this his glorious day.
Ye that are brave, now serve him against unnumbered foes;
let courage rise with danger and strength to strength oppose.

Stand up, stand up for Jesus, stand in his strength alone;
the arm of flesh will fail you, ye dare not trust your own.
Put on the gospel armor, each piece put on with prayer;
where duty calls or danger, be never wanting there.

Stand up, stand up for Jesus, the strife will not be long;
this day the noise of battle, the next, the victor's song.
To him that overcometh a crown of life shall be;
he with the King of glory shall reign eternally.

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School Finance	Lee Rockwell
School Recruitment	Tyler Jorgensen
Parent Relations	Jack Villiard

FORMER OFFICERS

Outreach Elder	Nic Holter
Congregation Treasurer	Jim Thies
School Board Chairman	Joe Lofsness
School Recruitment	Peter Kolch

We thank our continuing Officers for their service and the blessings they bring to St. John. We thank our former Officers for their years of service and the blessings they brought and continue to bring to St. John. We thank the families of our Officers for the sacrifices and support they give. We thank our coordinators and volunteers of St. John. We are blessed!

"God, We Praise You"

Hymn 971



1 God, we praise you! God, we bless you! God, we
2 True a - pos - tles, faith - ful proph - ets, saints who
3 Je - sus Christ, the King of glo - ry, ev - er -
4 Christ, at God's right hand vic - to - rious, you will



name you sov - 'reign Lord! Might - y King whom
set their world a - blaze, mar - tyr's, once un -
last - ing Son of God, hum - ble was your
judge the world you made; Lord, in mer - cy



an - gels wor - ship, Fa - ther, by your Church a - dored:
known, un - heed - ed, join one grow - ing song of praise,
vir - gin moth - er, hard the lone - ly path you trod:
help your ser - vants for whose free - dom you have paid:



all cre - a - tion shows your glo - ry; heav'n and
while your Church on earth con - fess - es one ma -
by your cross is sin de - feat - ed, hell con -
raise us up from dust to glo - ry; guard us



earth draw near your throne, sing - ing, "Ho - ly,
jes - tic Trin - i - ty: Fa - ther, Son, and
front - ed face to face, heav - en o - pened
from all sin to - day. King en - throned a -



ho - ly, ho - ly, Lord of hosts and God a - lone!"
Ho - ly Spir - it, God, our hope e - ter - nal - ly.
to be - liev - ers, sin - ners jus - ti - fied by grace.
bove all prais - es, save your peo - ple, God, we pray.