

I'm Fixed Upon It

Lenten Worship † March 13, 2024 7:00pm
Grace Lutheran Church | Davenport, Iowa | Pastor Stephanie Wood

Congregational Response in Bold.

Call to Worship

On our worst days, **God is good.**

On our best days, **God is good.**

When life is consistent, **God is good.**

And when life turns on its head, **God is good.**

Day and night, Monday through Sunday, **God is good. God is here. God is love.**

Hold tight to that good news. Let us worship God!

Service of Light Holden Evening Prayer Booklet..... p. 1-2

Confession & Forgiveness

... let us speak honestly with God. For even on our worst days, we belong to God, and that will never change. Join me in prayer—

Holy God, We often find ourselves moving through a world that does not make sense. Like Peter, we want to yell out, "This should not happen!" We want to control scenarios beyond our reach. We want to hold your world in our hands. Forgive us for the moments when we lead with declarations instead of curiosity. Forgive us for arguing when we could listen. Forgive us for fixating on one truth, when we could open ourselves up to many. Soften our hard edges and teach us how to listen. With hope in our hearts we pray, amen.

...God's love for us will always be deeper than we can imagine. We are seen. We are loved. And we are forgiven. Now follow Peter and go be the Church in the world. **Amen.**

Evening Thanksgiving Holden Evening Prayer Bookletp. 3

Psalmody Holden Evening Prayer Booklet..... p. 4-8

Prayer of Illumination

Let us pray. Listening God, **If we could attach ourselves to you, we would. We would scribble your scripture onto our tender hearts. We would weave your good news into the fiber of our being. We would bind ourselves to you, but instead, we wander. Instead of attaching ourselves to you, we find ourselves swept up in the business of the day. Like a seesaw of faithfulness, we move back and forth, up and down, constantly trying to find you in the midst of it all. So, speak clearly to us now. Quiet the distractions long enough for us to affix ourselves to your good news. We are listening. We are hungry. We are hopeful. Amen.**

Visio Divina

Scripture | Matthew 16:21-23

From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you." But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

Read Artist Statement Hannah Garrity

"God forbid it!" says Peter to Jesus (Matthew 16:22). In this image, Peter beseeches Jesus to avoid the cross, to not let the prophecies become reality.

After ten years in ministry, I work in a church for the first time. In this text, I feel Jesus speaking directly to me: "You are a hindrance to me, for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things" (Matthew 16:23). This is exactly where frustration surfaces for me in my amazing church job. It is when I have set my eye on human things. I worry about the budget. I worry about the email. I worry about the building. So why am I so focused on human things? And the negative ones, at that?

Because I'm human. Because these things matter. But not if I miss the grandeur of this incredible organization sharing the expansive love of God!

With every brush stroke in this ink painting, the humanity of Peter's face deepens, his expression clarifies. He cannot let his beloved friend be murdered. He worries about human things. How weighty and legitimate those things feel. Jesus seems free of those human worries. He focuses with confidence on the path ahead, though Peter's concern causes him to falter.

Perhaps we can each be free of human concerns as well... However, that feels like a pipe dream, and Jesus knows it: "Get behind me, Satan" (Matthew 16:23). He does not blame Peter. Instead, he calls out Satan from within his friend. In doing so, he offers us a much needed reminder to refocus. Thanks be to God.

Hymn *Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing* ELW 807

- 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.
 While the hope of endless glory fills my heart with joy and love,
 teach me ever to adore thee; may I still thy goodness prove.
- 2 Here I raise my Ebenezer: "Hither by thy help I've 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.
- 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, oh, take and seal it; seal it for thy courts above.

Affirmation of Faith

I believe in a God of second chances, **a God who sees through my stubbornness and holds my fear with tenderness.**

I believe that this God of second chances uses ordinary people like Peter to do good in the world. **Therefore, I believe and hope that God can use me too.**

I believe that from time to time, God invites us to imagine the impossible. I believe that from time to time, God invites us to change our minds. **This change is holy and important work, although challenging. When fear and scarcity plague me, or when the impossible feels out of reach, I believe that God meets me with grace and invites me to follow.**

Thanks be to God for a love like that. **Amen.**

Litany & Prayers Holden Evening Prayer Booklet.....p. 9-10

Final Blessing Holden Evening Prayer Booklet..... p. 11

Serving in Worship

Presiding..... Pastor Stephanie Wood
Vocal Leader.....Laura Toland
Pianist..... Susan Senn
Usher/Greeter Deb & Mike Kirby
Sound SystemRuss Finkler



Beseeching | Hannah Garrity
The Fourth Week of Lent | Matthew 16:21-23

Ink on paper