



## **BENEATH THE CROSS**

**Week 5: I Take, O Cross, Your Shadow for My Abiding Place**

***Wednesday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2026***

2026 Midweek Lenten Service: Provided by the Western North Dakota Synod-ELCA

### **WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**OPENING DIALOGUE** (from Psalm 57): *Please stand as you are able.*

Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful, **for in you my soul takes refuge.**

In the shadow of your wings I will take refuge, **until the destroying storms pass by.**

I cry to God Most High, **to God who is with me to the end.**

God will send from heaven and save me.

**God will send forth steadfast love and faithfulness.**

### **GATHERING SONG:**

*When Peace Like a River (It Is Well With My Soul)*

ELW #785

### **GREETING**

God who created all, who bore the cross, and who dwells in us, be with you all.

**And also with you.**

## **PRAYER**

Let us pray. **God of our redemption, keep us ever near the cross. Remind us of the extravagant love you showed to us through the life, death, and resurrection of your Son. Teach us to take up our cross and follow you. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

## **READING:** Colossians 1:15-20

A reading from Paul's letter to the Colossians.

<sup>15</sup>He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; <sup>16</sup>for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. <sup>17</sup>He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. <sup>18</sup>He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. <sup>19</sup>For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, <sup>20</sup>and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

Here ends the reading.

## **GOSPEL:** Mark 8:31-9:1

*Please stand as you are able for the reading of the gospel.*

Our gospel reading comes from the 8<sup>th</sup> chapter of the Gospel of Mark.

<sup>31</sup>Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. <sup>32</sup>He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. <sup>33</sup>But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

<sup>34</sup>He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. <sup>35</sup>For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. <sup>36</sup>For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? <sup>37</sup>Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? <sup>38</sup>Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." <sup>9</sup>And he said to them, "Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see that the kingdom of God has come with power."

The gospel of the Lord.

## **SILENT REFLECTION AND PRAYER**

*During this time, as you are comfortable, go to the table and take a piece of paper to write your prayers, burdens, etc. Take them to the cross and lay them, entrusting them into the care of Jesus.*

## **REFLECTION**

Lent is a journey, it is a journey we must take toward the cross, which is not at the end of our path but the beginning. As we draw close to our Wednesday night Lent services, may we always focus on bringing our worries, our joys, our sorrows, our prayers, our concerns and praises to lay them beneath the cross. God allows us to bear crosses, but we are not meant to carry them alone.

## **PRAYERS**

Let us pray. Beneath the cross of Jesus, **we lift up our joys and our sorrows to God.**

O Lord, amid the shifting sands of this world, **be our rock and our foundation.**

In the fears and uncertainties of our lives, **be our home and our resting place.**

When we lay our sins and burdens before you, **be our comfort and our guide.**

As we gaze upon the cross of Christ, **be our hope and our salvation.**

Heavenly Father, you sent your Son to us because you love us and want to save us.

By the power of the cross of Christ, you free us from sin to live each day for you.

We offer to you our burdens and prayer, entrusting them to Christ, who we trust will look upon them with compassion.

Bless + these crosses, signs of your glory, and let them remind us that Jesus died and rose for all. Help us to carry our cross, and to follow Jesus in serving others.

God of grace, you know what we need before we do, and we pray that you would show us clearly that you are among us. As our creator, make us a new creation. As our savior, make us right before you. As our guide, lead us to do your will in the world. Give us strength to journey with Jesus to the cross of salvation. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## **OFFERING**

The peace of Christ be with you all. **And also with you.**

As the offering is collected, turn to your neighbor and share a word of peace.

## **OFFERING PRAYER**

*Please stand as you are able.*

Let us pray. **God our provider, you have not fed us with bread alone, but with words of grace and life. We give you thanks for nourishing us in body, mind, and spirit, by the faith and fellowship we share. Bless us and these your gifts, which we receive from your bounty, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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, the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

## **LUTHER'S EVENING PRAYER**

Let us pray. **We give thanks to you, heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ your dear Son, that you have graciously protected us today. We ask you to forgive us all our sins, where we have done wrong, and graciously to protect us tonight. Into your hands we commend ourselves: our bodies, our souls, and all that is ours. Let your holy angels be with us, so that the wicked foe may have no power over us. Amen.**

## **BLESSING**

People of God, you have been crucified with Christ,  
and it is no longer you who live, but it is Christ who lives in you.  
The peace of God (+), which surpasses all our human understanding,  
keep our hearts and our minds in Christ Jesus. **Amen.**

## **SENDING SONG:**

*Beneath the Cross of Jesus*

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## **DISMISSAL:**

Go in peace, led by the cross of Christ. **C: Thanks be to God.**

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