

Sermon followed by Service

July 23, 202

2 Kings 2

Some time take a close look at the shields of the Apostles. Some tell us of the life they gave up for Jesus. Some tell us of the death they died for Jesus.

Elijah was so close to being like them. Like when Elijah stood up to King Ahab for leading God's people away from God to worship the rain-god Baal; Elijah stood up to the king: "There will be no more rain until I say so." After that Ahab ordered an international manhunt to hunt Elijah down and have him killed. Ahab's wife Jezebel wasn't content with just hunting Elijah down; she ordered that all the prophets of the LORD be hunted down and killed. Elijah was so close to being like them. Like when Elijah stood alone and challenged Ahab and the prophets of Baal to a showdown; even after Elijah brought down fire and rain from the LORD, Jezebel threatened to have him killed. Or in Naboth's vineyard, when Elijah stood up to Ahab and announced God's bloody judgment on Ahab and Jezebel Again and again, Elijah came so close to being like them.

But God delivered him. And not just from murderous Ahab and Jezebel and all the other God-haters who were against him. God delivered Elijah from death itself, taking him up to heaven in a whirlwind alive.

Why? Why Elijah and not Peter or Paul? Why Elijah and not Isaiah or Jeremiah? Why Elijah and not you or me? We're not told. We know God had something special in mind for Elijah with Jesus. When Jesus was getting his disciples ready for his journey to the cross Some 800 plus years after God took Elijah up to heaven, he brought Elijah back to earth with Moses to meet with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. There the Elijah who stood up to kings and warned them of God's coming judgment, that Elijah stood before the King of Kings to encourage Jesus in his coming judgment. Or better, the Elijah God specially delivered out of this world spoke with Jesus about the way God would specially deliver Jesus out of this world.

Why? Why Elijah? And why this special whirlwind to heaven? It could be as simple as this: Sometimes God likes to reward his people; sometimes God likes to do special, out-of-the ordinary, extraordinary things for his people. While

it's true we may never get the whirlwind treatment, it's also true we may never know how many special, out-of-the-ordinary, extraordinary things God is doing in our lives right now. Thank you, Lord, right?! But why this? For Elijah? Perhaps to reward Elijah. Perhaps to set Elijah apart as God's special prophet to encourage Jesus. Perhaps to show us how special Elijah is. Or perhaps God did this for Elijah to show us something special about himself.

What do we see here about God? How about God's respect and appreciation for Elijah's ministry, for Elijah's difficult ministry, his faithful ministry, and yes, his imperfect, struggling ministry. (A couple weeks ago we talked about those days Elijah just wanted to quit.) As God takes Elijah up into heaven, we are reminded how much God appreciates the gospel ministry of his people. That's so good to see, isn't it? Even though we may struggle and stumble, even though there may be times we see little to show for all our work and sacrifice, God appreciates and he rewards the gospel ministry of his hard-working, faithful people.

Just as it's so good to see God's heart for his ministry servants here in our lesson, it's so good to see how so many of you share God's heart for his ministry servants here at St. John. As we work together in God's gospel ministry, working with each other and working for each other, we may not be able to give each other a whirlwind ride up to heaven, but we can still share the treasures of heaven and earth with those who work with us and for us. I don't say that because you don't; I say that because you do share God's heart.

Then what do we see? We see what the school of prophets saw. Elisha picks up where Elijah left off. Just as Elijah struck the Jordan River with his cloak and the river split, so Elisha strikes the Jordan with Elijah's cloak and the river splits. That's when Elisha knew, that's when the school of prophets knew Elisha was God's man to take over from Elijah.

How do we know? How do I know that I am God's servant to be here? How does Alison know that she is God's servant to be here? I haven't ever split the Jordan or any other river; I don't think Alison has either. So how do we know? The same way that Barnabas and Silas knew in the New Testament. God's church called them. Working through his church, Christ called them. The same thing is true for me and for Alison and for all our teachers. The same thing is true for our Sunday School teachers and our elders who share the Word of God

with you on behalf of St. John. We know God has called us to serve with you here because 1) Christ calls through his church, 2) you are his church, 3) you have called us to serve here, 4) so we get to believe, we get to know that Christ has called us and put us here. What does that mean for us? We get to preach and teach, speak up and speak out, lead and serve as if God himself has put us here to do just that - because he has.

((And so we don't work here - who's the we? As pastor and teachers, as Sunday School Teachers and elders, as people called by St. John to share God's Word - we don't work here because it suits us as long as it suits us. No, we serve with you and we serve for you as servants of God called to serve by God. I don't have a miracle-working cloak to prove it. We have you to prove it.)))

Back to our lesson. Elisha was stepping into some big shoes. So God worked a pair of miracles to set Elisha up and show Elisha off as his prophet. First, we have the men of Jericho come to Elisha: "Our water is bad and so our land is bad." Elisha calls for a bowl of salt; he throws the salt into the spring; the water is healed and made fresh. Elisha could have pointed to himself; instead he pointed to LORD: "**This is what the LORD says: 'I have healed this water.'**" A nice way to start ministry; I imagine that warmed a few hearts to Elisha.

What happens next chills the heart. Elisha is on the way from Jericho to Bethel. Some boys - we don't need to think too young, perhaps teens - a gang of boys comes out of the town like a gang of hoodlums and mock Elisha: "Go on up, you baldy." What were they saying? "Go on up the road into Bethel"? "Go on up into heaven like Elijah"? We can't be sure what they meant by "go on up," but we can be sure what was in their hearts. They were mocking, jeering, ridiculing. If they didn't yet know who Elisha was, they were mocking a stranger they should have been respecting. If they did know who Elisha was, they were mocking a prophet of God, and in God's ears, that is no different than mocking God himself. We can't be sure what that gang of troublemakers was saying, but Elisha could hear the evil in their words; he could see the evil on their faces; and so he could feel the evil in their hearts. In the name of the LORD, he calls down a curse on them. Two bears come out of the woods and maul 42 of the troublemakers. God's message was clear: "Don't mess with Elisha."

Puts a chill in my heart for all the ways I have mocked and judged those I should have respected. Puts a chill in my heart for all the ways I have mocked and judged, for all the ways I have disrespected and made life difficult for God's servants - at church, in school or Sunday School, at home. Instead of making their lives more difficult, instead of making God's work more difficult for them, I should have gone out of my way to respect them; I should have made it my life to make life and ministry better for them. Makes me thankful I've gotten this far without a bear mauling me or worse.

Makes me thankful to have a God so serious about his ministry team. It's not a small thing to God when people disrespect his servants - whether it's at church, in school, or at home. It's not a small thing to God when people think it's a good thing to mess with his ministry. This ministry that God has entrusted to us isn't just a hobby for him, a fun thing on the side; it's a matter of life and death to God; God gave his Son for this ministry; Jesus gave his life for this ministry. The people that God has entrusted to our ministry aren't just numbers to God - grade numbers, room numbers, salary numbers; the people that God has entrusted to our ministry aren't just fodder to God, fodder to be chewed up and pooped out. The people that God calls to his ministry are precious to him, and that means the people God entrusts to our ministry are precious to him, especially precious because of the ministry he wants to work through us.

God isn't just looking to make this world a better place. He's not just looking to make people happy with themselves and nice to others. God knows the day is coming when this world will be destroyed with fire; he knows that day is coming because he will bring that day of judgment. So God knows our biggest problem, our real problem, isn't that we aren't happy enough with ourselves. In fact, the opposite is true. He knows we are too stuck on ourselves and too stuck on what we imagine happiness to be, too stuck on ourselves and too stuck on what we imagine happiness to be to appreciate the love and the life he has for us. And so we live in a world fighting against God and His Word and His Way, fighting against God in so many ugly, ugly ways. And to make it worse, some days, we set ourselves more with the world than with God.

But that hasn't stopped God. He hasn't stopped loving us; he hasn't stopped wanting to save us for life with him in heaven; he hasn't stopped wanting to save the world for life the way it's supposed to be. And so he gives us what we

need. He gives us his Son. For all the ways we have been like Ahab and Jezebel, for all the ways we have mocked and disrespected God's servants, God has given us Jesus to take our place as guilty, to take our place as judged, to take our place as cursed. That's what the cross is about. And now with Jesus, forgiven with Jesus, he gives you his place. He gives you his place as child of God; he gives you his place as servant and partner of God. He gives you his place to share God's life and his love. He gives you his place to share the treasures of heaven with the world around you.

Some days, that might put us with those apostles, with Elijah and Elisha, with the world against us. Then we get to remember, like those apostles, like Elijah and Elisha, we are so blessed - we have God for us and heaven ahead of us. May God bless us to share in and share out his life and his love! Amen.

July 22 & 23, 2023

NEW MORNING PRAISE

IN OUR WORLD TODAY ... it can sometimes be hard to see how much God respects and appreciates his Gospel workers.

IN OUR WORSHIP TODAY ... we are reminded how much God respects and appreciates, protects and rewards his Gospel ministry team. With thanks to our Lord, we welcome Alison Lindemann, our new Grade 5-6 Teacher, to our ministry team.

OPENING HYMN

"Let Children Hear the Mighty Deeds"

Hymn 758

Let children hear the mighty deeds which God performed of old,
which in our younger years we saw, and which our parents told.

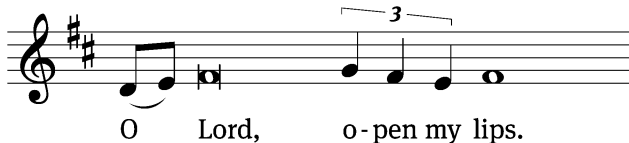
Make unto them his glories known, his works of pow'r and grace,
and we'll convey his wonders down through ev'ry rising race.

Our sons and daughters we shall tell and they will then tell theirs,
that generations yet unborn may teach them to their heirs.

O teach them with all diligence the truths of God's own Word,
to place in him their confidence, to fear and trust their Lord,

To learn that in our God alone their hope securely stands,
that they may ne'er forget his works, but walk in his commands.

OPENING SENTENCES



And my mouth shall de - clare 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.

C: **Amen.**



Give glory to God, our light and our life.



Come, O come, let us wor - ship.

COME, O COME, LET US SING TO THE LORD



Come, O come, let us sing to the Lord,



let us shout with joy to our sav - ing Rock;



come, en - ter in with our songs of praise,



come, en - ter in with thanks - giv - ing.



1 You are a great and a won - drous God,
2 Come, let us wor - ship and, bow - ing low,



cup - ping in your hands all the depths of earth.
kneel be - fore the One who has made us all.



You made the hills and the moun - tains high,
You are the God whom we call our own,



you made the seas and the dry land.
we are the flock that you shep - herd.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty and ever-living God, you have given exceedingly great and precious promises to those who trust in you. Grant us so firmly to believe in your Son Jesus that our faith may never be found wanting; 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

2 Kings 2

When the LORD was about to take Elijah up to heaven in a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here; the LORD has sent me to Bethel."

But Elisha said, "As surely as the LORD lives and as you live, I will not leave you." So they went down to Bethel.

The company of the prophets at Bethel came out to Elisha and asked, "Do you know that the LORD is going to take your master from you today?"

"Yes, I know," Elisha replied, "so be quiet."

Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here, Elisha; the LORD has sent me to Jericho."

And he replied, "As surely as the LORD lives and as you live, I will not leave you." So they went to Jericho.

The company of the prophets at Jericho went up to Elisha and asked him, "Do you know that the LORD is going to take your master from you today?"

"Yes, I know," he replied, "so be quiet."

Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here; the LORD has sent me to the Jordan."

And he replied, "As surely as the LORD lives and as you live, I will not leave you." So the two of them walked on.

Fifty men from the company of the prophets went and stood at a distance, facing the place where Elijah and Elisha had stopped at the Jordan. Elijah took his cloak, rolled it up and struck the water with it. The water divided to the right and to the left, and the two of them crossed over on dry ground.

When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, "Tell me, what can I do for you before I am taken from you?"

"Let me inherit a double portion of your spirit," Elisha replied.

“You have asked a difficult thing,” Elijah said, “yet if you see me when I am taken from you, it will be yours—otherwise, it will not.”

As they were walking along and talking together, suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind. Elisha saw this and cried out, “My father! My father! The chariots and horsemen of Israel!”

And Elisha saw him no more. Then he took hold of his garment and tore it in two.

Elisha then picked up Elijah’s cloak that had fallen from him and went back and stood on the bank of the Jordan. He took the cloak that had fallen from Elijah and struck the water with it. “Where now is the LORD, the God of Elijah?” he asked. When he struck the water, it divided to the right and to the left, and he crossed over.

The company of the prophets from Jericho, who were watching, said, “The spirit of Elijah is resting on Elisha.” And they went to meet him and bowed to the ground before him. “Look,” they said, “we your servants have fifty able men. Let them go and look for your master. Perhaps the Spirit of the LORD has picked him up and set him down on some mountain or in some valley.”

“No,” Elisha replied, “do not send them.”

But they persisted until he was too embarrassed to refuse. So he said, “Send them.” And they sent fifty men, who searched for three days but did not find him. When they returned to Elisha, who was staying in Jericho, he said to them, “Didn’t I tell you not to go?”

The people of the city said to Elisha, “Look, our lord, this town is well situated, as you can see, but the water is bad and the land is unproductive.”

“Bring me a new bowl,” he said, “and put salt in it.” So they brought it to him.

Then he went out to the spring and threw the salt into it, saying, “This is what the LORD says: ‘I have healed this water. Never again will it cause death or make the land unproductive.’ ” And the water has remained pure to this day, according to the word Elisha had spoken.

From there Elisha went up to Bethel. As he was walking along the road, some boys came out of the town and jeered at him. “Get out of here, baldy!” they said. “Get out of here, baldy!”

He turned around, looked at them and called down a curse on them in the name of the LORD. Then two bears came out of the woods and mauled forty-two of the boys. And he went on to Mount Carmel and from there returned to Samaria.

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

PSALM OF THE DAY

Psalm 78C

Refrain

Your Word, O LORD, is a lamp for my feet
and a light un - to my path.

My people, hear my / teaching;
listen to the words / of my mouth.
I will utter hidden things, things / from of old—
things our ancestors have / told us.

We will not hide them from their de- / scendants;
we will tell the next gener- / ation
the praiseworthy deeds / of the LORD,
his power, and the wonders / he has done. *Refrain*

He decreed statutes for / Jacob
and established the law in / Israel,
which he commanded our / ancestors
to teach their / children,

so the next generation would know them, even the children yet / to be born,
and they in turn would tell their / children.

Then they would put their / trust in God
and would not forget his deeds but would keep / his commands.

**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**

VERSE OF THE DAY

Philippians 4:19

Alleluia. And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of
his glory in Christ Jesus. Alleluia.

GOSPEL

Matthew 5:1-12

Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat
down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them.

He said:

“Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise be to you, O Christ!**

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

“Church of God, Elect and Glorious”

Hymn 854

Church of God, elect and glorious, holy nation, chosen race,
called as God’s own special people, royal priests and heirs of grace;
know the purpose of your calling, show to all his mighty deeds,
tell of love that knows no limits, grace that meets all human needs.

God has called you out of darkness into his most marv’lous light,
brought his truth to life within you, turned your blindness into sight.
Let your light so shine around you that God’s name is glorified
and all find fresh hope and purpose in Christ Jesus crucified.

Once you were an alien people, strangers to God's heart of love,
but he brought you home in mercy, citizens of heav'n above.
Let his love flow out to others, let them feel a Father's care,
that they too may know his welcome and his countless blessings share.

Church of God, elect and holy, be the people he intends,
strong in faith and swift to answer each command your master sends.
Royal priests, fulfill your calling through your sacrifice and prayer;
give your lives in joyful service, sing his praise, his love declare.

SERMON

INSTALLATION OF OUR NEW TEACHER

Miss Alison Lindemann – 5th & 6th Grade Teacher

M: Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ said to his Church: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

A Christian school is one way we carry out our Lord's command as we let children come to him and do not hinder them, but rather nurture them with the life-giving word of God. We do this trusting God's promise:

"Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it."

Exhortation to the Teacher-Elect

M: Dear sister in Christ, St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church has called you to serve as teacher. You have been prepared for this ministry by careful instruction in the Word of God so that you carry out your duties in conformity with that Word.

As an ambassador of Christ you are to teach the pure doctrine of God's Word, to instruct the young in the way of salvation, and always to have in your heart the spiritual welfare of every soul under your care. You are to devote yourself to the meditation and study of the Scriptures. You are to be an example to others in godliness and Christian living, putting no stumbling block in anyone's path, so that the ministry will not be discredited.

You are to speak the truth in love, as the apostle Peter reminds us: "Love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever."

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your heart to God. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

The ability to carry out this calling is not in us, but comes alone from God, as St. Paul reminded the Corinthian Christians: "Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God."

The Holy Spirit, who himself has called you to this ministry, will be with you.

Promises by the Teacher-Elect

M: In keeping with the word and will of the Lord, you are about to be installed as teacher at St. John Lutheran School. I ask you, in the presence of God and this congregation:

Are you fully determined to carry out this work according to the grace which God will give?

R: I am.

M: Do you believe that the canonical books of the Old and New Testament are the inspired Word of God and the only infallible rule of faith and practice?

R: I do.

M: Do you accept the three Ecumenical Creeds—the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian—as faithful testimonies to the truth of the Holy Scriptures, and do you reject all the errors which they condemn?

R: I do.

M: Do you solemnly promise that all your teaching will conform to the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions?

R: I do.

M: Will you give faithful witness to Christ in the world that God's love may be known in all that you do and say?

R: I will, and I ask God to help me.

M: Almighty God, who has given you the will to do these things, graciously give you the strength and compassion to perform them.

Exhortation to the Congregation

M: Brothers and sisters in Christ, you have heard the solemn promise given by the teacher you have called. I urge you, therefore, to receive her with joy and to keep in mind always what the Word of God expects of you as members of this congregation:

Work together with her for our Lord's kingdom so that by your works of service the Body of Christ might be built up.

Help her by your word and example in teaching the young, remembering how the Scriptures urge you to bring up your children in the training and instruction of the Lord.

Pray for her continually, that her ministry among you may be greatly blessed and that she may have a cheerful spirit in all her duties.

Provide also for her physical needs, for the Lord says, "The worker deserves his wages."

Honor and love her, as the apostle Peter urges, "Live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble."

Promises by the Congregation

M: I now ask you, in the presence of God:

Are you willing to receive her as a servant of Christ? Will you show her love and honor, and support her with your gifts and prayer? If so, answer: we will, and we ask God to help us.

C: We will, and we ask God to help us.

M: The almighty and merciful God strengthen and assist you always.

M: Students of St. John School, Jesus our Savior has promised eternal life to those who trust in him. Show your love to Jesus by cheerfully obeying your teachers, so that you benefit from their instruction, especially as they teach you God's saving Word. Give them honor and respect, so that their work will be a joy for them and an eternal blessing to you.

Installation

Alison Lindemann, I install you as teacher at St. John Lutheran School in the name of the Father and of the Son (†) and of the Holy Spirit.

May the Lord pour out on you his Holy Spirit for the work committed to you that you may faithfully proclaim the gospel.

Prayer

M: Almighty God, fountain of all wisdom, we praise and thank you for your goodness in giving us a Lutheran elementary school. Continue to bless our labors here, so that your Word may dwell richly in us and in our children and that your name may be glorified. Give the Holy Spirit to Alison, and equip her with heavenly wisdom and strength, that she may lead our children to you, and despite any discouragements faithfully carry out the duties of her calling. Move our students to godliness and obedience and cause them to grow through her instruction in your Word, so that she may serve you throughout her life and finally inherit eternal life. Help us at all times to regard our teachers as those whom you have sent, so that we support them in their ministry and pray and work for the welfare of our school. Hear us for Jesus' sake.

M: Go, then, take up the work to which you have been called.

The Lord bless you and make you a blessing to many, that you may bear fruit, and that your fruit may remain to eternal life.

INSTALLATION SONG – PRAYER & BLESSING

By Tim Samelson

(Prayer)

Light the world's darkness and turn it into day.

Lock the Devil's lies and his legion far away.

And let ev'ry suffering sinner see that you're the only Way.

Keep your Spirit with us thru the rocky race we run;

Cleanse our darkened souls in the life-blood of your Son,

And let us understand how your gracious will is done.

You forgive us fully, help us do the same.

Give us clothes and shelter, and feed us once again.

May our ev'ry action Proclaim your holy name.

(Blessing)

May the Lord bless you, yes, and guard you from great harms.

May He gently rock you in the comfort of His arms.

May the pains that shock you make you resolute and strong.

May the Spirit guide you to turn to right from wrong.

May the Truth of Jesus always carry you a-long.

And may He overwhelm you and fill your heart with song.

May the Lord bless you yes, and guard you from all harm.

May He gently rock you in the comfort of His arms.

And may He overwhelm you

and fill your heart with beauty, love and song.

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



The Lord bless and keep you.



A - men.



The Lord's face ev - er shine up - on you.



A - men.



The Lord grant you peace for all your days.



A - men.

CLOSING HYMN

"Dear Lord, to Your True Servants Give"

Hymn 896

Dear Lord, to your true servants give the grace to you alone to live.
Set free from sin to serve you, Lord, they go to share your living Word,
the gospel message to proclaim that all may know your saving name.

They gladly go at your command to spread your Word o'er sea and land.
Be with them, Lord, and make them strong
to heal sin's ills, to right the wrong.
Your rule is over wind and wave, and mighty is your arm to save.

When all their labor seems in vain, revive their sinking hopes again;
and when success crowns what they do,
O keep them humble, Lord, and true
until before your judgment seat they lay their trophies at your feet.

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