

The Hands of Self-Preservation

Lent Midweek 6

March 24, 2021





ST. JOHN

LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL

2290 Pretzer Road, Hemlock, MI 48626
www.stjohnhemlock.com
989-642-5178

Pastor Philip Loescher Mr. Matthew Stob, Principal
pastor.philiploescher@gmail.com stobm@stjohnhemlock.com
(262) 305-8769 (cell) (715) 494-9597

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THEME: THE HANDS OF SELF PRESERVATION

When we consider Jesus and the people around him in his Passion, we can't help but think of their hands-- the hands that beat their breast, accepted money for betrayal, petulantly swung swords, pointed in accusation, beat and disavowed, praised, washed, were pierced, and offered eternal life. In short, we can't help but think about how we sinners have had the same sinful hands of those who surrounded Jesus in his Passion, and how Jesus our Savior has touched us with his hands of grace.

THE HANDS OF THE PASSION

Hands of Self-Preservation

Opening Hymn

CW 355

"Take to World, but Give Me Jesus"

1. Take the world, but give me Jesus!

All its joys are but a name.

But his love abides forever,

Through eternal years the same.

Refrain:

Oh, the height and depth of mercy;

Oh, the length and breadth of love!

Oh, the fullness of redemption,

Pledge of endless life above!

**2. Take the world, but give me Jesus,
Sweetest comfort of my soul.
With the Savior watching o'er me,
I can sing, though thunders roll. Refrain**

**3. Take the world, but give me Jesus!
In his cross my trust shall be
Till with clearer, brighter vision
Face to face my Lord I see. Refrain**

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

C: Amen.

M: This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you:

C: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.

M: If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness,

C: We lie and do not live by the truth.

M: If we claim to be without sin,

C: We deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

C: Father, I have sinned against you and am no longer worthy to be called your child. Yet in mercy you sacrificed your only Son to purge away my guilt. For his sake, O God, be merciful to me, a sinner, and in the joy of the Holy Spirit let me serve you all my days.

Silence for private confession.

M: If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. Upon this, your confession, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son † and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Thanks be to God. Amen.

Prayer

M: Lord God, we thank you for this day of grace now drawing to a close. Stay with us and warm our hearts with your forgiving love in Christ. May your Word keep our faith burning brightly that we may walk in the light of your presence through the darkness of this world.

Come and bless us as we worship you: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

C: Amen

Psalm 38

(Sung in Unison)

Refrain: Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

**O Lord, do not rebuke me in your anger*
Or discipline me in your wrath.**

**For your arrows have pierced me,*
And you hand has come down upon me.**

**My guilt has overwhelmed me*
Like a burden too heavy to bear.**

Refrain

**All my longings lie open before you, O LORD;*
My sighing is not hidden from you.**

**I wait for you, O LORD;*
You will answer, O Lord my God.**

**Come quickly to help me,*
O Lord my Savior.**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son*
And to the Holy Spirit,
As it was in the beginning,*
Is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Refrain

Psalm Prayer

M: Lord our God, you did not forget the pierced body of your Son and his sighing was not hidden from you. In your kindness look also on us, your children, weighed down with sins, and grant us the fullness of your mercy; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.

C: Amen.

Passion Reading

Mark 15:16-47

¹⁶ The soldiers led him away inside the palace, which is the Praetorium, and called together the whole cohort of soldiers. ¹⁷ They put a purple robe on him, twisted together a crown of thorns, and put it on him. ¹⁸ The soldiers began to salute him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" ¹⁹ They kept hitting him on the head with a reed and spitting on him. They also kneeled down to pay homage to him.

²⁰ When they had mocked him, they took off the purple robe and put his own clothing on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

²¹ A certain man, Simon of Cyrene (the father of Alexander and Rufus), was passing by on his way in from the country. They forced him to carry Jesus' cross. ²² They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha, which means, "The place of a skull." ²³ They tried to give him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. ²⁴ They crucified him. And they divided his garments, casting lots for them to decide what each of them would take.

²⁵ Now it was the third hour when they crucified him. ²⁶ The superscription stating the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews." ²⁷ They also crucified two criminals with him, one on his right and one on his left.

²⁹ Those who passed by ridiculed him, shaking their heads and saying, "Ha! You who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, ³⁰ save yourself! Come down from the cross!"

³¹ In the same way, the chief priests along with the experts in the law mocked him among themselves. "He saved others," they said. "He cannot save himself. ³² Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross so that we may see and believe!"

Those who were crucified with him also insulted him.

³³ When it was the sixth hour, darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour. ³⁴ At the ninth hour Jesus shouted with a loud voice, "*Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?*" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

³⁵ When some of those standing there heard this, they said, "Listen, he's calling Elijah!"

³⁶ Someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. They said, "Leave him alone. Let's see if Elijah comes to take him down."

³⁷ Jesus cried out with a loud voice and breathed his last. ³⁸ The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. ³⁹ When the centurion who stood facing him saw how he cried out and breathed his last, he said, "Truly this man was the Son of God!"

⁴⁰ There were also women watching from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome. ⁴¹ When he was in Galilee, they followed him and served him. Many other women also came up with him to Jerusalem. ⁴² It was already evening, and since it was Preparation Day (that is, the day before the Sabbath), ⁴³ Joseph from Arimathea, a prominent member of the Council, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, boldly went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. ⁴⁴ Pilate was surprised that he was already dead. He summoned the centurion and asked him if Jesus had been dead for a long time. ⁴⁵ When he learned from the centurion that it was so, he granted the body to Joseph. ⁴⁶ Joseph bought a linen cloth, took him down, and wrapped him in the linen cloth. He laid him in a tomb that had been cut out of rock, and he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. ⁴⁷ Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses were watching where the body was laid.

Seasonal Response

All: All we like sheep have gone astray, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. By his wounds we are healed.

Hymn

CW 116

"In the hour of Trial"

**1. In the hour of trial, Jesus, plead for me
Lest by base denial I unworthy be.
When you see me waver, With a look recall,
Nor for fear or favor Ever let me fall.**

**2. With forbidden pleasures Should this vain world charm
Or its tempting treasures Spread to work me harm,
Bring to my remembrance Sad Gethsemane
Or, in darker semblance, Cross-crowned Calvary.**

**3. Should your mercy send me Sorrow, toil, and woe,
Or should pain attend me On my path below,**

**Grant that I may never Fail your cross to view;
Grant that I may ever Cast my care on you.**

**4. When my life is ending, Though in grief or pain,
When my body changes Back to dust again,
On your truth relying, Through that mortal strife,
Jesus, take me, dying, To eternal life.**

Sermon “Hands of Self Preservation” Matthew 27:15-26

¹⁵ At the time of the Festival the governor had a custom to release to the crowd any one prisoner they wanted. ¹⁶ At that time they were holding a notorious prisoner named Barabbas. ¹⁷ So when they were assembled, Pilate said to them, “Which one do you want me to release to you? Barabbas—or Jesus, who is called Christ?” ¹⁸ For Pilate knew that they had handed Jesus over to him because of envy.

¹⁹ While he was sitting on the judgment seat, Pilate’s wife sent him a message. “Have nothing to do with that righteous man,” she said, “since I have suffered many things today in a dream because of him.” ²⁰ But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus put to death. ²¹ The governor asked them, “Which of the two do you want me to release to you?”

“Barabbas!” they said.

²² Pilate said to them, “Then what should I do with Jesus, who is called Christ?”

They all said to him, “Crucify him!”

²³ But the governor said, “Why? What has he done wrong?”

But they kept shouting even louder: “Crucify him!”

²⁴ When Pilate saw that he was accomplishing nothing and that instead it was turning into a riot, he took water, washed his hands in front of the crowd, and said, “I am innocent of this righteous man’s blood. It is your responsibility.”

²⁵ And all the people answered, “Let his blood be on us and on our children!” ²⁶ Then he released Barabbas to them, but he had Jesus flogged and handed him over to be crucified.

Prayers and Lord's Prayer

M: Lord God, all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works come from you. Give to us, your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey your commandments. Defend us also from the fear of our enemies that we may live in peace and quietness, through the merits of Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

**C: 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.**

Evening Prayer

**All: All praise to you, our God, this night for all the blessings
of the light.
Keep us, yes, keep us, King of kings beneath your own
almighty wings.
Forgive us, Lord, through your dear Son for sins that we
this day have done,
that as we sleep, peace we would hold with all, with you,
within our souls. Amen.**

Blessing

M: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, will be with us in truth and love.

C: Amen.

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SERVING THE LORD BY SERVING HIS PEOPLE TODAY:

Presiding Minister/Preacher: Pastor Paul Tessmer

Organist: Ryan Davidson

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