



Lenten Worship – Week 2

Wednesday, March 11, 2020

First Lutheran Evangelical Lutheran Church, Port Colborne
St. Matthew's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Welland



Midweek Lenten Series: By Faith

What is faith? The text from Hebrews 11:1 defines it in this way: "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."

This series focuses on the book of Hebrews, especially the eleventh chapter. The first four weeks provide a journey through the faith of the Old Testament figures, especially Noah, Abraham, Moses, and the Israelites. The fifth week brings us to Jesus, "the perfecter of our faith," and his path to the cross.

Week of Lent 2: The Faith of Abraham

By faith, Abraham journeyed to an unknown land, trusted in God's promise of a son, and offered up that son as a sacrifice. When faith means taking a risk, how do we respond?

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LENTEN MIDWEEK SERVICE – MARCH 11, 2020

Opening Dialogue

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors
in many and various ways, by the prophets,
but in these last days God has spoken to us by the Son.
He is the reflection of God's glory
and the exact imprint of God's very being,
and he sustains all things by his powerful word.
Since we have confidence by the new and living way
opened for us by Jesus,
**let us approach with a true heart
in full assurance of faith.**

Gathering Song 808 Lord Jesus, You Shall Be My Song

Reading Hebrews 11:1, 8-22

Reflection

The reflection concludes:
Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for,
The conviction of things not seen.

Hymn of the Day 326 Bless Now, O God, the Journey

Prayers

Surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

A brief silence.

Faithful God, shower the world with your lovingkindness,
that all may know your peace.

Open our eyes to the needs of our neighbors,
that all may know your love.

Comfort the sick and dying,
that all may know your mercy.

Guide our leaders in the way of truth,
that all may know your justice.

Focus our hearts on the way of the cross,
that all may have faith in you.

Let us pray in the words of Martin Luther:
**Behold, Lord, an empty vessel that needs to be filled.
My Lord, fill it. I am weak in the faith; strengthen me.**

I am cold in love; warm me and make me fervent, that my love may go out to my neighbor. I do not have a strong and firm faith; at times I doubt and am unable to trust you altogether. O Lord, help me. Strengthen my faith and trust in you. In you I have sealed the treasure of all I have. I am poor; you are rich and came to be merciful to the poor. I am a sinner; you are upright. With me, there is an abundance of sin; in you is the fullness of righteousness. Therefore I will remain with you, of whom I can receive, but to whom I may not give.
Amen. (Evangelical Lutheran Worship, p. 87)

Finally, let us pray with the words our Savior gave 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,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen**

Peace

Blessing

The God of peace,
who brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus,
the great shepherd of the sheep,
make you complete in everything good
so that you may do God's will,
through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever.
Amen.

Sending Song 790 Day by Day

Dismissal

Hebrews 11:1, 8-22

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to set out for a place that he was to receive as an inheritance; and he set out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he stayed for a time in the land he had been promised, as in a foreign land, living in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. By faith he received power of procreation, even though he was too old—and Sarah herself was barren—because he considered him faithful who had promised. Therefore from one person, and this one as good as dead, descendants were born, 'as many as the stars of heaven and as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.'

All of these died in faith without having received the promises, but from a distance they saw and greeted them. They confessed that they were strangers and foreigners on the earth, for people who speak in this way make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. If they had been thinking of the land that they had left behind, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; indeed, he has prepared a city for them.

By faith Abraham, when put to the test, offered up Isaac. He who had received the promises was ready to offer up his only son, of whom he had been told, 'It is through Isaac that descendants shall be named after you.' He considered the fact that God is able even to raise someone from the dead—and figuratively speaking, he did receive him back. By faith Isaac invoked blessings for the future on Jacob and Esau. By faith Jacob, when dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, 'bowing in worship over the top of his staff.' By faith Joseph, at the end of his life, made mention of the exodus of the Israelites and gave instructions about his burial.