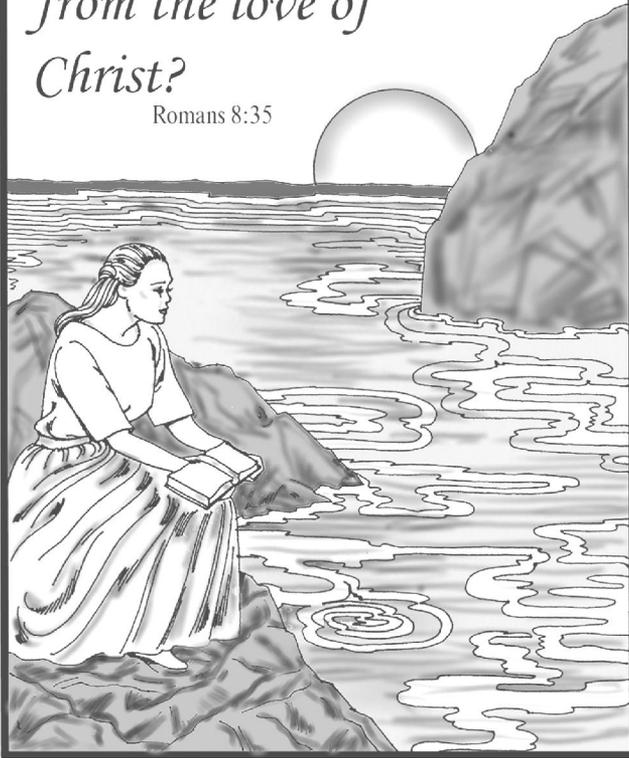


*Who shall separate us
from the love of
Christ?*

Romans 8:35



A Worship Service

offered

by

*Living Hope Evangelical
Lutheran Church*

Midlothian, Virginia

THE INVOCATION

M: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

HYMN — Glory Be to Jesus (103:3)

Glory be to Jesus, Who in bitter pains
Poured for me the lifeblood From his sacred veins.

Grace and life eternal In that blood I find;
Blest be his compassion, Infinitely kind.

Blest through endless ages Be the precious stream
Which from endless torments Did the world redeem.

RESPONSIVE READING — Psalm 46

M: God is our refuge and strength,

C: **An ever-present help in trouble.**

M: Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way,

C: **And the mountains fall into the heart of the sea.**

M: Though its waters roar and foam,

C: **And the mountains quake with their surging.**

M: Be still and know that I am God;

C: **I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.**

FIRST LESSON — Luke 22:39-54

Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him. On reaching the place, he said to them, “Pray that you will not fall into temptation.” He withdrew about a stone’s throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, “Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.” An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.

When he rose from prayer and went back to the disciples, he found them asleep, exhausted from sorrow. “Why are you sleeping?” he asked them. “Get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation.”

While he was still speaking a crowd came up, and the man who was called Judas, one of the Twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him, but Jesus asked him, “Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?”

When Jesus’ followers saw what was going to happen, they said, “Lord, should we strike with our swords?” And one of them struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his right ear.

But Jesus answered, “No more of this!” And he touched the man’s ear and healed him.

Then Jesus said to the chief priests, the officers of the temple guard, and the elders, who had come for him, “Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come with swords and clubs? Every day I was with you in the temple courts, and you did not lay a hand on me. But

this is your hour—when darkness reigns.”

Then seizing him, they led him away and took him into the house of the high priest.

HYMN — When I Survey the Wondrous Cross (125:4)

When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of Glory died;
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ, my God;
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to his blood.

See, from his head, his hands, his feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down.
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown.

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an offering far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

SECOND LESSON — Romans 8:35-39

³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ³⁶ As it is written: “For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.”

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

HYMN — Jesus, Your Blood and Righteousness (376:4)

Jesus, your blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress;
Mid flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
With Joy shall I lift up my head.

Bold shall I stand in that great day —
Who can a word against me say?
Fully through you absolved I am
From sin and fear, from guilt and shame.

Lord, I believe were sinners more
Than sands upon the ocean shore,
You have for all a ransom paid,
For all a full atonement made.

When from the dust of death I rise
To claim my mansion in the skies,
E'en then this shall be all my plea:
Jesus has lived and died for me.

THE 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.

THE BENEDICTION

M: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.

C: **Amen.**

HYMN — In the Hour of Trial (116:4)

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.

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.

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

Worship Leaders
Michael Ferguson
David MacDonald
Jack Hoffman
Nick Hauman
Pastor Seifert



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Sunday worship 10:30 am

We consider it a privilege to serve you at your facility. We cordially invite you to worship with us at our facility, too.

Service Introduction

As difficult as your life on this sinful earth might become, as hopeless as its outlook may seem—nothing shall separate you from the love of Christ. Your Savior God will never leave you nor will he forsake you. God will assure you of that through his Word today.

Let's begin with the invocation at the top of page two.

Introduction to Psalm 46

Even if the whole earth were to give way and the mountains were to fall into the sea, your God would not leave you. Nothing can separate you from his love and his powerful hand. God tells us that in Psalm 46. Let's read it responsively.

Introduction to Luke 22:39-54

During this season of Lent we will hear about the suffering and death of our Lord Jesus for our sins. Today we hear about his betrayal in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Devotion on Romans 8:35-39

Two Christian men were diagnosed with cancer. One of them was Jeff. He was 47 years old. He was married with two boys in grade school. The doctor said the outlook for him wasn't good. The other one was Erich. He was 26 years old and a student at the seminary. He wasn't married, but he had a fiancée. He wanted to be a pastor but he couldn't because he got cancer. The doctor said he would probably die.

Maybe you don't have cancer like Jeff and Erich. But I'm sure you have problems and troubles that make your life difficult and make you worry. Whatever's troubling you, it might seem to you sometimes that you're right here, God and his help are way over there and trouble and pain and worry are everywhere in between.

Listen carefully to these words of God:

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

God promises you, even if your life is as tough as they come, even if it seems like wherever you turn and wherever you go, you lose, God says you don't lose, you win! In fact, you more than win. God calls you more than a conqueror, a super-conqueror. Because nothing can separate you from Jesus and his love.

Now there might be some people who imply that if you're a Christian, your life is going to be more-or-less smooth sailing. A Christian life is an easy life. But then what are you supposed to think if you're a Christian and bad things like cancer or losing people we love to death happen to you. Maybe you'd think, *Well, maybe I'm not a good enough Christian, or Maybe God doesn't love me.*

Jeff and Erich were Christians. God loved them. But they still got cancer. Why? Not because God wanted to hurt them. They got cancer because they were sinners who live in a sinful world—just like us. God designed the world to be perfect, but then we messed that up by disobeying God—and we still disobey him—and so the world is not perfect anymore. We suffer because of our sin.

That's not very good news. But there is some good news coming. Even though we sin and because of sin we suffer, God did something to fix it. He sent us a Savior Jesus. And nothing—not even the worst car accident or worst disease ever, can separate us from Jesus. Jesus can see everything—he even sees you and exactly what's troubling you. And Jesus knows everything—he even knows you and exactly what's hurting you. And Jesus knows exactly how you feel. He knows because even though he's our God, he became a person and lived on this earth and suffered everything we do and more, even though he didn't have any sin that deserved it. He even suffered something that we never will. He suffered hell when he was on the cross to save us from our sins so that we will go to heaven. And in heaven every last thing that even causes us the slightest bit of sadness or pain or worry will be completely gone. God was right on when he said that even though our lives aren't perfect now, we are more than conquerors in Jesus Christ.

And God also says to you, *Until that day comes when I take you to heaven, I'm going to stay with you on earth and bless you so that even before you get to heaven, you're going to be more than a conqueror.* Because nothing in all creation will be able to separate you from Jesus.

Not even death or life or anything in between. Not even demons or angels or anything in between. Neither your circumstances right now nor your circumstances ten years from now nor any circumstances in between. Neither the worst mood you've ever been in nor the best mood you've ever been in nor any mood in between. God says you can take anything in the world from the loss of your job to the loss of your spouse to the sins of your past even to the loss of your own life, take anything you want and put it between you and your Savior Jesus and his love is going to blow it all away and still come to you with all its blessings. God says whatever comes into your life that makes your body or bank account weaker and weaker, God's love keeps a firm hold on you and through his promises makes your faith stronger and stronger. No matter what happens God says, you are more than a conqueror—you win. Not because of anything you've done or do, but because nothing in all creation can separate you from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Erich and Jeff got cancer. Their bodies grew weak. But even in those painful, scary, uncertain circumstances and weak bodies, they were more than conquerors. They knew from God's promises that no matter what happened to them, they would win. They both did win. Erich has been cancer-free for over about three years now. He's married and serves as a pastor in Minnesota. He and his wife adopted a child. God's love never failed him and it never will. Erich won and he's still winning. God made things turn out different for Jeff. Three and a half years of radiation and chemotherapy took their toll on his body. He could barely sit up, could barely keep his eyes open. And he died. But God's love never failed him—not even for one second. He doesn't have cancer anymore, either. He's in heaven now. Jeff won, and he's going to be a winner forever.

I can't say exactly what God has in store for me or for you. Maybe some really tough stuff, maybe some not-so-tough stuff. I don't know. But whether it's easier than we expect or harder than we can imagine, we have God's promise and we are therefore convinced: We win! Amen.