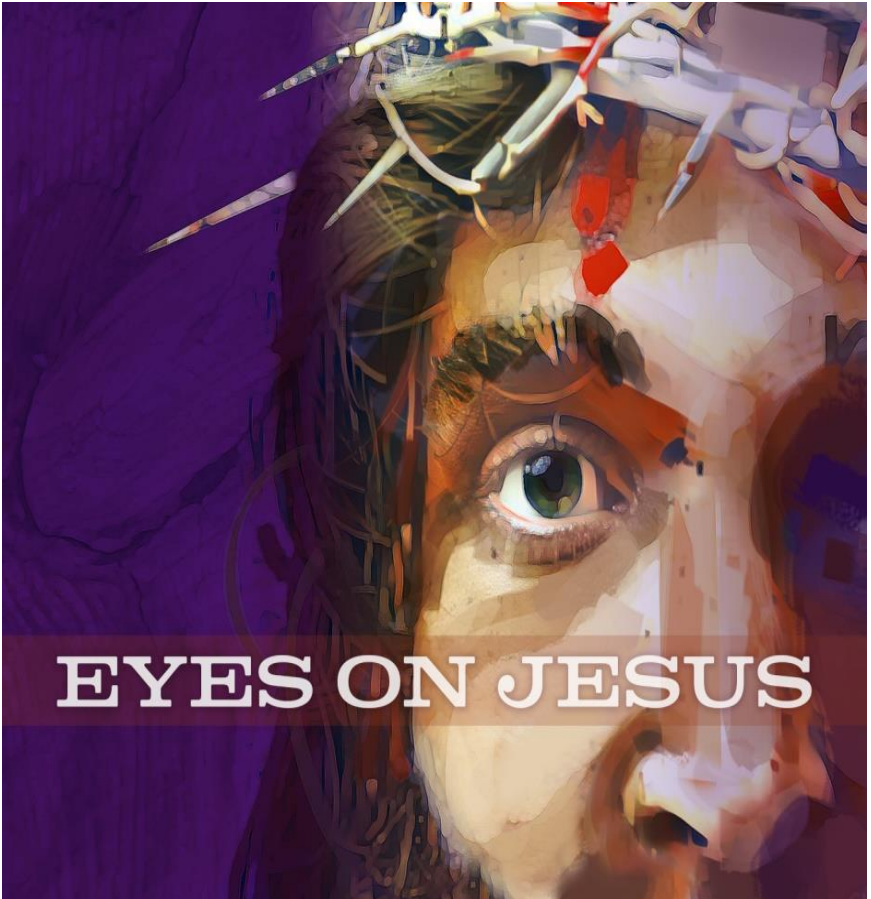


Midweek Lenten Service

March 24th, 2021 - 7 pm



*Faith Lutheran Church
310 Southdale Road East
London, ON N6E 1A1*

Worldly Eyes

As We Gather

This Lent, we will use the metaphor of eyesight to examine how the various people in Mark's Gospel viewed Jesus during His Passion. In most cases, they misunderstood who He was and what He was doing; then again, sometimes by faith people did recognize Him correctly.

We have these forty days of Lent in which we may look within ourselves as people of faith in our day. How are we like or unlike the people who saw Jesus in the flesh? Most important, as we gather for worship, we will see what Jesus has done to save us from our sins by His holy, precious blood and innocent sufferings and death.

Today, we learn of Pilate's worldly view and how, to keep his position and placate the Jewish leaders and crowd, he handed Jesus over for crucifixion. The soldiers saw the opposite of a worldly king, but their ironic hailing of Him as "King of the Jews" proclaims who He really is. The world looks for power and glory; God's way is suffering and the cross. Which way do we look in the daily decisions we make?

Hymn "Our Eyes Behold the Savior's Face"

- 1 Our eyes behold the Savior's face
And yet cannot perceive
That His perspective held our grace
Before we could believe.
- 2 Our focus flits and fails to see
The One whose steadfast gaze
Propelled Him to the darkened tree
Enveloped in death's haze.
- 3 Our sights train on the dreadful cross.
Beneath His knowing eyes,
Our sins are bare and set for loss;
He sees us as His prize.

4 Our vision blurs with anxious tears
As Jesus' eyelids fall
To conquer sin and all our fears
And tear in two our pall.

5 Our view scans for the coming Day
That evermore grows near,
When Jesus wipes our tears away
And all is crystal clear.

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Opening Sentences *Psalm 121:1–2; 145:15–16; 17:8; 25:15; Job 19:15–17*

P I lift up my eyes to the hills.
From where does my help come?

C **My help comes from the LORD,
who made heaven and earth. Psalm 121:1–2**

P The eyes of all look to You,
and You give them their food in due season.

C **You open Your hand;
You satisfy the desire of every living thing. Psalm
145:15–16**

P Keep me as the apple of Your eye;

C **hide me in the shadow of Your wings. Psalm 17:8**

P My eyes are ever toward the LORD,

C **for He will pluck my feet out of the net. Psalm 25:15**

P For I know that my Redeemer lives,

C **and at the last He will stand upon the earth.**

P And after my skin has been thus destroyed,

C **yet in my flesh I shall see God,**

P whom I shall see for myself,

C **and my eyes shall behold, and not another.
My heart faints within me! Job 19:25–27**

Confession

P As we perceive how the people around Jesus were unable to truly see Him, let us confess our own failures to respond to His grace and mercy.

Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

P The disciples could not recognize that Jesus would be taken from them in death,

C **and we have failed to see that He is pleased with the loving service of His followers.**

P Judas betrayed Jesus out of fear and for financial gain,

C **and we have betrayed our weak faith in Him when making difficult decisions.**

P Jesus' closest disciples gave in to sleep rather than watching and praying,

C **and we have preferred physical comfort over spiritual turmoil.**

P Peter failed to keep his bold promise of faithfulness to save his skin,

C **and we have let Sunday's strength fade when Monday morning dawned.**

P Jesus fulfilled the promise of salvation, even as His opponents sought to be rid of Him,

C **and He went to the cross because of our sins as well.**

P Pilate wanted to keep his political position, the soldiers saw only a weak man on the cross,

C **and we have let ourselves be deceived by the world's definition of success.**

P Jesus' body and blood are not visible in the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper,

C **and we have not always looked beyond what our eyes**

can see in the Sacrament.

P His Father forsook Jesus on the cross as He took all the punishment we deserve,

C **and we have, at times, focused on our best efforts instead of fixing our eyes on Jesus.**

P Jesus' followers didn't understand before Easter that He was only resting temporarily,

C **and we have not always looked beyond our physical health or longevity.**

P The angel proclaimed Jesus' resurrection to the women,

C **and we pray that You, heavenly Father, will forgive us all our sins for Jesus' sake. Help us fix our eyes on Jesus each day until we follow Him to our eternal home, where we shall see You face to face.**

Forgiveness

P “From of old no one has heard or perceived by the ear, no eye has seen a God besides [the Lord], who acts for those who wait for Him” (Isaiah 64:4). As a called and ordained servant of Christ I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

Psalmody *Psalm 2; antiphon: v.4*

P The psalmist writes of the folly of those who oppose the Lord and His Anointed.

He who sits in the heavens laughs; the LORD holds them in derision.

Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain?

C **The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together,**

P against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying,

- C **Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us.”**
He who sits in the heavens laughs; the LORD holds them in derision.
- P Then He will speak to them in His wrath, and terrify them in His fury, saying,
- C **“As for Me, I have set My King on Zion, My holy hill.”**
- P I will tell of the decree: The Lord said to Me, “You are My Son;
- C **today I have begotten You.**
- P Ask of Me, and I will make the nations Your heritage,
- C **and the ends of the earth Your possession.**
- P You shall break them with a rod of iron
- C **and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.”**
- P Now therefore, O kings, be wise;
- C **be warned, O rulers of the earth.**
- P Serve the LORD with fear,
- C **and rejoice with trembling**
- P Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and you perish in the way, for His wrath is quickly kindled.
- C **Blessed are all who take refuge in Him.**
He who sits in the heavens laughs; the LORD holds them in derision.

First Reading *Isaiah 13:9–11*

- P Isaiah foretells punishment for the world’s wickedness.

A reading from the 13th chapter of Isaiah.

⁹Behold, the day of the LORD comes, cruel, with wrath and fierce anger, to make the land a desolation and to destroy

its sinners from it. ¹⁰For the stars of the heavens and their constellations will not give their light; the sun will be dark at its rising, and the moon will not shed its light. ¹¹I will punish the world for its evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; I will put an end to the pomp of the arrogant, and lay low the pompous pride of the ruthless.

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Second Reading *1 John 2:15–17*

P We must choose between the things of this world and the will of God.

A reading from the second chapter of First John.

¹⁵Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions—is not from the Father but is from the world. ¹⁷And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Third Reading *John 18:33–38*

P Jesus contrasts His kingdom with that of Pilate and the world.

A reading from the 18th chapter of John.

³³So Pilate entered his headquarters again and called Jesus and said to him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” ³⁴Jesus answered, “Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me?” ³⁵Pilate answered, “Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you over to me. What have you done?” ³⁶Jesus answered,

“My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world.”³⁷ Then Pilate said to him, “So you are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.”³⁸ Pilate said to him, “What is truth?” After he had said this, he went back outside to the Jews and told them, “I find no guilt in him.

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Responsory *1 Tim. 6:14b, 15b, 12a; 1 Peter 1:8, adapted*

P Jesus Christ . . . is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords.

C **Though we have not seen Him, we love Him.
Though we do not now see Him, we believe in Him and rejoice with joy.**

P Fight the good fight of the faith.

C **Though we have not seen Him, we love Him.
Though we do not now see Him, we believe in Him and rejoice with joy.**

P Jesus Christ . . . is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords.

C **Though we have not seen Him, we love Him.
Though we do not now see Him, we believe in Him and rejoice with joy.**

Passion *Mark 15:1–20*

P This Lent, we are looking at the events of our Lord’s Passion through the eyes of some of the people who witnessed it. Today, we find ourselves speaking the words

of the chief priests and the soldiers, the groups who called for Jesus' execution and ironically called Him "King."

The Passion of Our Lord according to St. Mark, the 15th chapter.

And as soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. And they bound Jesus and led Him away and delivered Him over to Pilate. And Pilate asked Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?" And He answered him, "You have said so." And the chief priests accused Him of many things. And Pilate again asked Him, "Have You no answer to make? See how many charges they bring against You." But Jesus made no further answer, so that Pilate was amazed. Now at the feast he used to release for them one prisoner for whom they asked. And among the rebels in prison, who had committed murder in the insurrection, there was a man called Barabbas. And the crowd came up and began to ask Pilate to do as he usually did for them. And he answered them, saying, "Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" For he perceived that it was out of envy that the chief priests had delivered Him up. But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release for them Barabbas instead. And Pilate again said to them, "Then what shall I do with the man you call the King of the Jews?" And they cried out again, "Crucify Him." And Pilate said to them, "Why? What evil has He done?" But they shouted all the more, "Crucify Him!" So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, he delivered Him to be crucified. And the soldiers led Him away inside the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters), and they called together the whole battalion.

And they clothed Him in a purple cloak, and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on Him. And they began to salute Him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they were striking His head with a reed and spitting on Him and kneeling down in homage to Him. And when they had

mocked Him, they stripped Him of the purple cloak and put His own clothes on Him. And they led Him out to crucify Him.

P O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Hymn

“What Is the World to Me”

#730

- 1 What is the world to me
 With all its vaunted pleasure
When You, and You alone,
 Lord Jesus, are my treasure!
You only, dearest Lord,
 My soul’s delight shall be;
You are my peace, my rest.
 What is the world to me!

- 2 The world seeks to be praised
 And honored by the mighty
Yet never once reflects
 That they are frail and flighty.
But what I truly prize
 Above all things is He,
My Jesus, He alone.
 What is the world to me!

- 3 The world seeks after wealth
 And all that mammon offers
Yet never is content
 Though gold should fill its coffers.
I have a higher good,
 Content with it I’ll be:
My Jesus is my wealth.
 What is the world to me!

- 4 What is the world to me!
 My Jesus is my treasure,
My life, my health, my wealth,

My friend, my love, my pleasure,
My joy, my crown, my all,
My bliss eternally.
Once more, then, I declare:
What is the world to me!

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Sermon Worldly Eyes

Canticle

P We are using hymn 420 as the canticle for each of our midweek Lenten services. Today's second stanza sings a thousand thanks to our Lord for deciding to go to the cross to atone for our sins.

Hymn "Christ, the Life of All the Living" #420 v. 1, 6–7

- 1 Christ, the life of all the living,
 Christ, the death of death, our foe,
Who, Thyself for me once giving
 To the darkest depths of woe:
Through Thy suff'rings, death, and merit
I eternal life inherit.
 Thousand, thousand thanks shall be,
 Dearest Jesus, unto Thee.
- 6 Thou hast suffered great affliction
 And hast borne it patiently,
Even death by crucifixion,
 Fully to atone for me;
Thou didst choose to be tormented
That my doom should be prevented.
 Thousand, thousand thanks shall be,
 Dearest Jesus, unto Thee.

7 Then, for all that wrought my pardon,
 For Thy sorrows deep and sore,
 For Thine anguish in the Garden,
 I will thank Thee evermore,
 Thank Thee for Thy groaning, sighing,
 For Thy bleeding and Thy dying,
 For that last triumphant cry,
 And shall praise Thee, Lord, on high.

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Salutation

P The Lord be with you.
C **And also with you.**

Prayer of the Church

P Let us pray for the Church around the world, ourselves,
 and all people in their various needs.

The eyes of all look to You, and You give them their food
in due season. *Psalm 145:15*

For farmers and ranchers and those who bring food to
market, that God would provide favorable weather,
bountiful harvests, and relief from both drought and flood,
let us pray to the Lord.

C **Look on them all in Your mercy, heavenly Father.**

P My eyes are ever toward the LORD, for He will pluck my
feet out of the net. *Psalm 25:15*

For all who struggle with unemployment or
underemployment, with poor living conditions or
displacement from home, with personal demons or ill
health, let us pray to the Lord.

C **Behold their turmoil, Lord Jesus, and grant them relief
and hope.**

P His lightnings light up the world; the earth sees and trembles. *Psalm 97:4*

For all people in authority over communities and countries, all whose decisions affect the climate of the planet and the health of its inhabitants, and all who are charged to maintain justice within their borders and peace among nations, let us pray to the Lord.

C **Gaze upon Your servants, O Lord; protect and guide them that they may serve with wisdom, compassion, and courage.**

P I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? My help comes from the LORD.

Psalm 121:1–2a

For all who serve the Lord as they care for others—medical personnel and first responders, counselors and advisers, friends and neighbors, professionals and volunteers—let us pray to the Lord.

C **Observe how they use the gifts You have given them, O Holy Spirit, and open doors of opportunity for them so that many may rejoice together.**

P Keep me as the apple of Your eye; hide me in the shadow of Your wings. *Psalm 17:8*

For the Church around the world, as clergy and lay leaders seek to proclaim the Gospel and faithfully endeavor to share their faith, especially in the face of persecution, let us pray to the Lord.

C **See their struggle, O Holy Spirit, and give them strength to persevere and grow.**

P Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him! *Psalm 34:8*

For the Church, wherever it gathers around Word and Sacrament, relying on God's steadfast love and faithfulness, and looking forward to the fulfillment of all

His gracious promises, let us pray to the Lord.

C Watch over Your Church, Lord Jesus; protect and defend us until that day we see You face to face.

P Into Your hands, heavenly Father, we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy for the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C Amen.

Prayer from Sunday

P Let us pray. Almighty God, by Your great goodness

C mercifully look upon Your people that we may be governed and preserved evermore in body and soul;

P through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

Prayer for Peace

P Let us pray. O God, from whom come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works,

C give to us, Your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey Your commandments and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness;

P through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Lord's Prayer

**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.**

Nunc Dimittis

P Guide us waking, O Lord, and guard us sleeping, that
awake we may watch with Christ and asleep we may rest
in peace.

Benediction

P The blessing of almighty God—the Father, who saw
mankind’s hopeless condition, the (+) Son, who showed
the depth of God’s love, and the Holy Spirit, who has
opened our eyes of faith in Christ—be upon you now and
forever.

C **Amen.**

Hymn “O Jesus, King Most Wonderful” #554

- 1 O Jesus, King most wonderful!
 O Conqueror renowned!
 O Source of peace ineffable,
 In whom all joys are found:
- 2 When once You visit darkened hearts,
 Then truth begins to shine,
 Then earthly vanity departs,
 Then kindles love divine.
- 3 O Jesus, light of all below,
 The fount of life and fire,

Surpassing all the joys we know,
All that we can desire:

4 May ev'ry heart confess Your name,
Forever You adore,
And, seeking You, itself inflame
To seek You more and more!

5 Oh, may our tongues forever bless,
May we love You alone
And ever in our lives express
The image of Your own!

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Dismissal

P Go in peace as you serve the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

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