

Easter 3 5/4/14
Luke 24:13-35 A

“ALL FLESH IS LIKE GRASS AND ALL OF ITS GLORY LIKE THE FLOWER OF GRASS. THE GRASS WITHERS, AND THE FLOWER FALLS, BUT THE WORD OF THE LORD REMAINS FOREVER.”

We can see the grass. That’s good news, because it means the snow is gone and – maybe, just maybe -- spring is here. But its also bad, because it means we are going to have to spend our time cutting and trimming the grass, instead of spending as much quality time as possible on the grass at the golf course.

When you think about it, the grass doesn’t stand a chance. The sun shines on it, you water and fertilize it, and even if it survives getting trampled on or ripped out of the ground by a good divot, the snow comes and it dies. No matter what you do, the grass doesn’t stand a chance.

Quoting the prophet Isaiah, Peter writes,
“All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord remains forever.”

“The flesh” is much more than the tissue and muscle that hangs on our bones, although it certainly includes the body. “The flesh” in the Bible means everything that does not last forever. Whether it gets eaten up by the sin that is within us, or whether it gets eaten up by outside forces that attack and destroy it, the flesh will “wither and fall.”

Our problem is that we tend to believe that the things of the flesh will last forever and never wither and fall. And so we put our love, our trust, our hope in that which is doomed to fail, “that moth and rust destroy and thieves break in and steal (Matt 6:19).”

And, we are surprised – even shocked -- when those things do not last forever, make our every dream come true, but wither and fall and disappoint. Maybe it's our health or the accomplishments we've worked so hard for, the money and possessions we've accumulated. Yet, we are overwhelmed with disappointment and feel as though we have been cheated or an injustice done to us when our new toy doesn't satisfy us anymore – especially when our neighbor has the newer and improved

model; or when that person we're having the affair with proves to be just like the spouse we are married to; when people don't do things our way.

Peter reminds us not to put our hope and confidence in the things of the flesh, because "All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls." Rather, he says that we should place our hope and confidence in the word of the Lord, because "the word of the Lord remains forever."

Which brings us to the two men who were traveling on the road from Jerusalem to Emmaus. They were disciples of Jesus, among the 72 Jesus had sent out "two by two, into every town and place where He Himself was about to go (Lk 10)." They had heard the report of the women that Jesus was risen from the dead and was alive. They had heard the report of the Peter and John, who had gone to the tomb.

Last Sunday, we heard the account of how, on Easter Sunday, the disciples were together in Jerusalem behind locked doors for fear of the Jews. And how Jesus walked right through the doors and gave them His peace and showed them His wounds and they were very glad. For some reason, these two were not there.

They were so engrossed in their struggle to make sense of what happened when they were in Jerusalem for the Passover that they didn't realize that another traveler had joined them. It's Jesus. But, in their doubt, Luke tells us, "Their eyes were kept from recognizing Him." We must understand that Luke is not talking about physical vision, but the spiritual condition of the Emmaus disciples. They were not walking by faith, but by unbelief and doubt. All they could say was, "we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel." In other words, they were doubting that Jesus was the Savior. Nothing went the way they expected it would go. Nothing turned out the way they thought it should turn out. And they were teetering on the brink of despair; ready to conclude that even Jesus and His Word were like grass and the flower of the grass, that wither and fall.

"We had hoped that He was the one to redeem Israel." The Emmaus disciples were doubting, thinking Jesus wasn't the Savior because He didn't give them what they wanted. How often are we disappointed, doubtful of Jesus, because He doesn't do things our way or give us what

we want? How often do we treat Jesus as though He were the goose to lay the golden egg instead of our Savior from sin, death, and hell?

There's only one remedy for this kind of "foolishness" and "slowness of heart to believe." And that remedy is to hear the Word of the Lord. "The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the Word of the Lord remains forever."

Christ is risen. He is risen indeed! He has brought life and immortality to life. And His Word makes the forgiveness, life, salvation, peace, and joy Jesus won with His Easter resurrection our very own. "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ," the Bible teaches us. The Word of the Lord creates faith in us so that we always trust, always hopes, are always comforted in Jesus.

As they walked, Jesus "interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself," and yet, their eyes are still kept from recognizing Him. It was when He was at table with them that something happened that opened their eyes, "He took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened, and they recognized them."

In the beginning, Adam ate of the forbidden fruit and his eyes were opened. And what did Adam see with his opened eyes? He saw the fallen creation of God in which His creation did not know Him or care to do His will, much like the grass that grows and then dies. But now, as these men in Emmaus eat the bread, their eyes are opened and they see the 2nd Adam, through whom the creation is redeemed and in Whom is restored the image of God in all who believe.

Now, even though He has vanished from their sight, they are no longer sorrowful and depressed. Now, through the hearing of the Word and the eating of the Supper, their eyes are opened and they know the truth and their hope and confidence are built upon a firm foundation that will stand forever. They understand that by His suffering and death, Christ has redeemed the world. And by His resurrection from the dead, He is present with us, and they are glad.

There is a lesson for us in this, My Dear Friends in Christ. We must ever seek God where He has promised to be found. I was watching the

news this past week when a story came on about a woman who was frying pancakes and – wait for it – the face of Jesus suddenly appeared on one. And she still has the pancake if you would like to see the face of Jesus. This is sad -- very, very sad. It is Satan who draws us away from the means where Jesus has promised to be found to trust in emotional outburst, visions, dreams. He does this so that he can keep our eyes closed, so that we remain in doubt and despair, continually looking to the flesh of this world for contentment and peace.

The risen Jesus comes and finds us on our road through His Word – the visible Word and the spoken Word of the Sacraments. Through these means, Jesus give us faith; He opens our eyes, so that we may walk by faith. Through these means, Jesus raises us to a new life and real hope and an unfailing trust in His enduring Word.

Jesus opens our eyes, that we may see through the tears and trials of today to that day when we will rise to eternal life in Jesus. Then, our eyes will truly be opened and we will see Jesus face to face and as He is. And we will be forever with the Lord, where there is no doubt, no unbelief, no sorrow, no sadness. The day will never be “far spent” and “darkness” will never come.

To God the be Glory. Amen.

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Concordia Lutheran Church

The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod

801 Beacon Lane

Beulah, North Dakota

Rev. Toby H. Heller, Pastor

May 4, 2014



We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over Him.

Do not our hearts burn within us while He talked to us on the road, while He opened to us the Scriptures?

Romans 6:9; Luke 24:32

DIVINE SERVICE Setting One

Hymn of Invocation # 474

Confession & Absolution p. 151

Introit

Behold, how good and pleasant it is

when brothers dwell in unity!

It is like the precious oil on the head, running down on the beard, on the beard of Aaron,

running down on the collar of his robes!

It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion!

For there the Lord has commanded the blessing, life forevermore.

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.

Behold, how good and pleasant it is

when brothers dwell in unity!

Kyrie p. 152

This is the Feast p. 155

Salutation & Collect p. 156

O God, through the humiliation of Your Son You raised up the fallen world. Grant to Your faithful people, rescued from the peril of everlasting death, perpetual gladness and eternal joys; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

First Reading: Acts 2:14a, 36-41 (ESV)

But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them.

"Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."

Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what

shall we do?" And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to Himself." And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation." So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

Gradual

Christ has risen from the dead.

God the Father has crowned him with glory and honor,

He has given him dominion over the works of his hands;
he has put all things under his feet.

Epistle Reading: 1 Peter 1:17-25 (ESV)

And if you call on Him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for your sake, who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; for "All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord remains forever." And this word is the good news that was preached to you.

Holy Gospel: St. Luke 24:13-35 (ESV)

That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were kept from recognizing Him. And He said to them, *"What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?"* And they stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered Him, "Are You the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?" And He said to them, *"What things?"* And they said to Him, "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and rulers delivered Him up to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. But we had hoped that He was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened. Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning, and when they did not find His body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that He was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but Him they did not see." And He said to them, *"O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into His glory?"* And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, He interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if He were going farther, but they urged Him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent." So He went in to stay with them. When He was at table with them, He took the bread

and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened, and they recognized Him. And He vanished from their sight. They said to each other, "Did not our hearts burn within us while He talked to us on the road, while He opened to us the Scriptures?" And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!" Then they told what had happened on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Nicene Creed p. 158

Hymn of the Day # 919

Sermon: The Word of the Lord Remains Forever

Prayer of the Church

Offering

"What Shall I Render" p. 159

Service of the Sacrament p. 160

Distribution Hymns # 629, 601, 575

"Thank the Lord" p. 164

Post-Communion Collect p. 166

Benediction p. 166

Closing Hymn # 878

In our thoughts and prayers,

† Bernice Herrmann, Myrna Prawdzik (Marty Black's mother), & Chris Reamer (Marty Black's sister);

† Lorena Scheid, who has become a resident of Marian Manor, Glen Ullin;

† For favorable weather, that all agricultural endeavors may result in an abundant harvest.

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia! Welcome to worship in this season of Easter as we gather to rejoice that Christ has overcome death and the grave and opened the gate of everlasting life to us. "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting? Thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 15). Visitors, please sign our guest book and worship with us again soon!

Noah And The Flood: Does the story of Noah and the Flood have any meaning for our faith and life today? What message does it send about how God chooses to use water?



Please join us for Bible class this morning as we begin a new Bible study of Genesis 6-9.

Monday — Wednesday of this week, Pastor will be at the Spring Pastors Conference. In case of emergency, please call Jamey Backus, 873-7673.



Muffins for Moms: The young women of the Church will be serving muffins next Sunday, May 11th, in honor of Mother's Day. Please join us!



Potluck Recognition: Please join us Sunday, May 18th, 10:30 a.m., for a potluck brunch to recognize our 2014 high school graduates.

The May calendar, Pray for us calendar, birthday and anniversary sheet and the March council minutes are in the black stacking trays in the social hall.

The May Human Care Project is collecting pasta for Women's Action & Resource Center. Please place your items in the shelf unit in the entry way. Thank you.



Vacation Bible School will be June 1-5, Sunday - Thursday, 5:00 -7:30 p.m. If anyone has questions or is willing to help, please contact Anne Rosenow, 880-1473, or Joslyn Frey. All Children are invited to join us!

The Mission mailing committee, Lori Kuschel, Bernice Herrmann, Eleanor Becker and Marlene Schriefer would like to thank the Council for the soup and sandwich monies given for mailing 4 boxes of Bibles and Sunday School materials to Nigeria, West Africa.

In a recent letter from ThankGod Kpurkunee, Rivers State, Nigeria, West Africa, he stated, "We are happy that no power could stop the work and precious souls are being saved. We are extremely sorry to write to you that we don't have any qualified ministers to feed us with nutritious spiritual food from the word of God for our growth and edification, neither do we get books and Bibles for our enlightenment and growth. We hope that our Almighty Father enables you to send some boxes of Bibles and books to us. We are praying for your ministry."



Stewardship of Offerings and Attendance

Attendance: ??? Offerings: \$2,370.00

"You were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot." We have been ransomed—brought back from the slavery into which we were born. We do not belong to ourselves, or to the devil, or to the world: we belong to Jesus. Therefore, we live our lives not in accordance with our own wisdom, but in line with God's Word.

† This Week at Concordia †

Sunday 8:30 am Divine Service
 9:30 am Sunday School/Bible Class
 11:00 am *Worship @ Glen Ullin*

Monday — Pastor @ Spring Pastors Conference
Wednesday

Wednesday 7:00 pm Chime Practice
 7:30 pm Bell Practice

Sunday 8:30 am Divine Service
 9:30 am Sunday School/Bible Class
 * Last day of Sunday School
 11:00 am *Worship @ Glen Ullin*

Church Office Hours

Monday - Friday 8:30 AM—12:30 PM

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Today we celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Communion in which we joyfully receive Christ's Body and Blood, under bread and wine, for the forgiveness of our sins. As we celebrate the Sacrament, we also give public witness that we are in complete agreement with the denomination's doctrinal teachings at whose altar we commune. Therefore, we ask that only communicant members of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod commune with us. All guests are asked to talk to Rev. Heller before coming to the altar to receive the Sacrament.

*Please use a pew card to record your worship and/or
Communion attendance this morning.*