



## Living Among the Bible's Trees Tree of the Lord's Planting

Midweek Lent 4  
March 25, 2020  
7:00 p.m.

### Zion Lutheran Church & School

*Servants of Jesus Building Relationships for Eternity  
Nurturing & Educating Children to Become Lifelong  
Followers of Jesus*

Worship: 8:00, 10:30 a.m. Sunday School: 9:15 a.m.  
Midweek Lent Services: 5:15 & 7:00 p.m.

1501 Gaiser Drive, Seymour, IN 47274  
Phone: 812-522-1089

Email: [zlc@zionseymour.org](mailto:zlc@zionseymour.org) Web: [www.zionseymour.org](http://www.zionseymour.org)

### As We Gather

The trees of the Bible help us realize why we need a Savior, how God provided a Savior for us in the person of Jesus Christ, and how the saved lives of repentant believers look. Today we consider how God brings low the haughty and raises up the humble and repentant. Our Lord Jesus is like a sprig from the top of a cedar, "planted" by God (and risen) to become a new, glorious tree. Though those who rely on Him are seemingly insignificant, like a mustard seed, they grow as the Church to give shelter to all people who flock to our Lord and His gracious mercy.

### Hymn - *LSB 540 Christ, the Word of God Incarnate*

Christ, the Word of God incarnate,  
Lord and Son of Abraham;  
Christ, the radiance of the Father,  
Perfect God, the great I AM;  
Christ, the light, You shine unvanquished,  
Light and life You bring to all;  
Light our path with Your own presence,  
Grant us grace to heed Your call.

Christ, the living bread from heaven,  
Food for body, food for soul;  
Christ, the manna daily given,  
Nourish, strengthen, make us whole.  
Feed us with the food of heaven,  
Foretaste of the feast to be;  
Quench our thirst with living water  
Springing up eternally.

Christ, the shoot that springs triumphant  
From the stump of Jesse's tree;  
Christ, true vine, You nurture branches  
To bear fruit abundantly.  
Graft us into You, O Savior;  
Prune our hearts so we remain  
Fruitful branches in Your vineyard  
Till eternal life we gain.

Christ, our good and faithful shepherd,  
Watching all Your lambs and sheep;  
Christ, the gate that guards the sheepfold,  
Never-failing vigil keep.  
When we stray, Good Shepherd, seek us,  
Find us, lift us, bear us home;  
Lamb of God, our shepherd, keep us;  
Let us hear Your voice alone.

Christ, the way that leads unailing  
To the Father's home on high,  
Christ, the truth that frees the captive,  
Christ, the life that cannot die.  
Mediator to the Father,  
Sacrifice and great High Priest:  
Lead us to Your heav'nly mansions,  
There to share Your wedding feast.

Christ, the Alpha and Omega,  
Christ, the firstborn from the dead,  
Christ, the life and resurrection,  
Christ, the Church's glorious head:  
Praise and thanks and adoration  
And unending worship be  
To the Father and the Spirit  
And to You eternally.

Text: © 2001 Steven P. Mueller. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110001729

**Lent Versicles** - *Psalm 118:24; Psalm 113:3; Joel 2:13; Matthew 16:24; Isaiah 53:5*

- L This is the day which the Lord has made;  
C **let us rejoice and be glad in it.**  
L From the rising of the sun to its setting,  
C **the name of the Lord is to be praised.**
- L Return to the Lord, your God, for He is gracious and merciful,  
C **slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and repents of evil.**  
L Jesus said: If any man would come after Me,  
C **let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.**  
L Christ was wounded for our transgressions.  
C **He was bruised for our iniquities.**
- L From the rising of the sun to its setting,  
C **the name of the Lord is to be praised.**  
C **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.**

**Psalm** - *Psalm 104:10–18; antiphon: v. 16*

- P The trees of the LORD are watered abundantly,  
the cedars of Lebanon that He planted.  
You make springs gush forth in the valleys;  
C **they flow between the hills;**  
P they give drink to every beast of the field;  
C **the wild donkeys quench their thirst.**  
P Beside them the birds of the heavens dwell;  
C **they sing among the branches.**  
P From Your lofty abode You water the mountains;  
C **the earth is satisfied with the fruit of Your work.**  
P You cause the grass to grow for the livestock  
C **and plants for man to cultivate,**  
P that he may bring forth food from the earth  
C **and wine to gladden the heart of man,**  
P oil to make his face shine  
C **and bread to strengthen man's heart.**  
P The trees of the LORD are watered abundantly,  
C **the cedars of Lebanon that He planted.**  
P In them the birds build their nests;  
C **the stork has her home in the fir trees.**  
P The high mountains are for the wild goats;  
C **the rocks are a refuge for the rock badgers.**  
**The trees of the LORD are watered abundantly,  
the cedars of Lebanon that He planted.**

**Psalm Prayer**

- P Father in heaven, who provides for all Your creatures,  
supply us with all that we need for the support of this  
body and life, even as Your Son taught us to pray:  
“Give us this day our daily bread.” Fill us with joyous  
confidence toward You, that worrying cares be  
banished from our hearts, and we may never doubt that  
You will so bless our labors as to provide us with food  
and clothing, and teach us to be therewith content.  
C **Amen.**

**The Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ** - *The Praetorium*

- A This is the Passion of the Lord.  
C **Thanks be to God.**

**Office Hymn** - *LSB 436 Go to Dark Gethsemane*

Go to dark Gethsemane,  
All who feel the tempter's pow'r;  
Your Redeemer's conflict see,  
Watch with Him one bitter hour;  
Turn not from His griefs away;  
Learn from Jesus Christ to pray.

Follow to the judgment hall,  
View the Lord of life arraigned;  
Oh, the wormwood and the gall!  
Oh, the pangs His soul sustained!  
Shun not suffering, shame, or loss;  
Learn from Him to bear the cross.

Calv'ry's mournful mountain climb;  
There, adoring at His feet,  
Mark that miracle of time,  
God's own sacrifice complete.  
“It is finished!” hear Him cry;  
Learn from Jesus Christ to die.

Early hasten to the tomb  
Where they laid His breathless clay;  
All is solitude and gloom.  
Who has taken Him away?  
Christ is ris'n! He meets our eyes.  
Savior, teach us so to rise.

Text: Public domain

**First Reading** - *Ezekiel 17*

The word of the LORD came to me: “Son of man, propound a riddle, and speak a parable to the house of Israel; say, Thus says the Lord GOD: A great eagle with great wings and long pinions, rich in plumage of many colors, came to Lebanon and took the top of the cedar. He broke off the topmost of its young twigs and carried it to a land of trade and set it in a city of merchants. Then he took of the seed of the land and planted it in fertile soil. He placed it beside abundant waters. He set it like a willow twig, and it sprouted and became a low spreading vine, and its branches turned toward him, and its roots remained where it stood. So it

became a vine and produced branches and put out boughs.

“And there was another great eagle with great wings and much plumage, and behold, this vine bent its roots toward him and shot forth its branches toward him from the bed where it was planted, that he might water it. It had been planted on good soil by abundant waters, that it might produce branches and bear fruit and become a noble vine.

“Say, Thus says the Lord GOD: Will it thrive? Will he not pull up its roots and cut off its fruit, so that it withers, so that all its fresh sprouting leaves wither? It will not take a strong arm or many people to pull it from its roots. Behold, it is planted; will it thrive? Will it not utterly wither when the east wind strikes it—wither away on the bed where it sprouted?”

Then the word of the LORD came to me: “Say now to the rebellious house, Do you not know what these things mean? Tell them, behold, the king of Babylon came to Jerusalem, and took her king and her princes and brought them to him to Babylon. And he took one of the royal offspring and made a covenant with him, putting him under oath (the chief men of the land he had taken away), that the kingdom might be humble and not lift itself up, and keep his covenant that it might stand. But he rebelled against him by sending his ambassadors to Egypt, that they might give him horses and a large army. Will he thrive? Can one escape who does such things? Can he break the covenant and yet escape?”

“As I live, declares the Lord GOD, surely in the place where the king dwells who made him king, whose oath he despised, and whose covenant with him he broke, in Babylon he shall die. Pharaoh with his mighty army and great company will not help him in war, when mounds are cast up and siege walls built to cut off many lives. He despised the oath in breaking the covenant, and behold, he gave his hand and did all these things; he shall not escape. Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: As I live, surely it is my oath that he despised, and my covenant that he broke. I will return it upon his head. I will spread my net over him, and he shall be taken in my snare, and I will bring him to Babylon and enter into judgment with him there for the treachery he has committed against me. And all the pick of his troops shall fall by the sword, and the survivors shall be scattered to every wind, and you shall know that I am the LORD; I have spoken.”

Thus says the Lord GOD: “I myself will take a sprig from the lofty top of the cedar and will set it out. I will break off from the topmost of its young twigs a tender one, and I myself will plant it on a high and lofty mountain. On the mountain height of Israel will I plant it, that it may bear branches and produce fruit and become a noble cedar. And under it will dwell every kind of bird; in the shade of its branches birds of every sort will nest. And all the trees of the field shall know that I am the LORD; I bring low the high tree, and make high the low tree, dry up the green tree, and make the dry tree flourish. I am the LORD; I have spoken, and I will do it.”

- A This is the Word of the Lord.
- C **Thanks be to God.**

## Second Reading - *Mark 4:30–32*

And he said, “With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable shall we use for it? It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when sown on the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth, yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants and puts out large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.”

- A This is the Word of the Lord.
- C **Thanks be to God.**

## Responsory - *Isaiah 11:1, 10; 1 Peter 2:24*

- P There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse,  
and a Branch from his roots shall bear fruit.
- C **Christ Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree,  
that we might die to sin and live to righteousness.**
- P In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples—  
of Him shall the nations inquire, and His resting place shall be glorious.
- C **Christ Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree,  
that we might die to sin and live to righteousness.**
- P There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse,  
and a Branch from his roots shall bear fruit.
- C **Christ Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree,  
that we might die to sin and live to righteousness.**

## Hymn - *LSB 421 Jesus, Grant That Balm and Healing*

Jesus, grant that balm and healing  
In Your holy wounds I find,  
Ev'ry hour that I am feeling  
Pains of body and of mind.  
Should some evil thought within  
Tempt my treach'rous heart to sin,  
Show the peril, and from sinning  
Keep me from its first beginning.

Should some lust or sharp temptation  
Fascinate my sinful mind,  
Draw me to Your cross and passion,  
And new courage I shall find.  
Or should Satan press me hard,  
Let me then be on my guard,  
Saying, “Christ for me was wounded,”  
That the tempter flee confounded.

If the world my heart entices  
With the broad and easy road,  
With seductive, sinful vices,  
Let me weigh the awful load  
You were willing to endure.  
Help me flee all thoughts impure  
And to master each temptation,  
Calm in prayer and meditation.

Ev'ry wound that pains or grieves me  
By Your wounds, Lord, is made whole;  
When I'm faint, Your cross revives me,  
Granting new life to my soul.  
Yes, Your comfort renders sweet  
Ev'ry bitter cup I meet;  
For Your all-atoning passion  
Has procured my soul's salvation.

O my God, my rock and tower,  
Grant that in Your death I trust,  
Knowing death has lost its power  
Since You crushed it in the dust.  
Savior, let Your agony  
Ever help and comfort me;  
When I die be my protection,  
Light and life and resurrection.  
Text: Public domain

### Sermon - *Tree of the Lord's Planting*

### Hymn - *Among the Bible's Trees*

Among the Bible's trees we live.  
How true they grow, as well they should.  
From them may we this Lententide  
Learn how our Lord died for our good.

When faithful leaders were exiled,  
Taken to Babylon by force,  
The king enthroned in Israel  
Forgot the Lord without remorse.

Rebellious trees, we ought be hewn,  
But God a new sprig planted He,  
That 'neath its shelt'ring branches we  
Might know His grace, from sins set free.

Lord Jesus Christ, God's only Son,  
Whose body hung on Calv'ry's Tree,  
O living Word, Your sacrifice  
Pardon proclaims eternally.

Text: James Pierce. Copyright © 2019 Concordia Publishing House. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

**Offering** – *Offerings may be mailed to or dropped off at Zion. Please consider setting up an electronic transfer of your offering through the church office to ensure the continuity of Zion's ministry through this difficult time.*

### Magnificat - *LSB 934 My Soul Now Magnifies the Lord*

My soul now magnifies the Lord;  
My spirit leaps for joy in Him.  
He keeps me in His kind regard,  
And I am blest for time to come.

For He alone who shows such might  
Has done amazing things to me.  
His mercy flows; His name like light  
Remains in time perpetually.

His arm is strong; His strength is great.  
He scatters those of proud intent  
And casts them down from high estate,  
Then gives the low His nourishment.

He feeds the hungry as His own;  
The wealthy leave with empty hands.  
He gives His help to Israel;  
His gracious promise always stands.

Text: © 1978 Lutheran Book of Worship. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110001729

### Prayer of the Church

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

For everyone weighed down by their bondage to sin and an inability to stop sinning by thought, word, and deed, let us pray to the Lord.

C **For the sake of Christ's sacrifice on the tree of the cross, heavenly Father, open their ears to hear the Gospel anew; free them to live before You in Your kingdom.**

P For everyone who has fallen prey to society's distorted morality, let us pray to the Lord.

C **For the sake of Christ's sacrifice on the tree of the cross, heavenly Father, surround them with faithful and caring members of the Body of Christ; call them back in repentance and hope.**

P For everyone who struggles with the Corona virus, for those who deal with the difficulties that have come about due to the outbreak, for all governing officials as they continue to do what they can to help us, and for all people who tune in remotely to be a part of worshiping You, let us pray to the Lord,

C **For the sake of Christ's sacrifice on the tree of the cross, heavenly Father, strengthen Your people amid adversity, guide them in how to proceed, and draw us evermore back to you.**

P For those who keep the peace at home or are deployed abroad, for those who provide care and guidance in relationships, finances, and health, and for those who respond to natural disasters and crises of various sorts, let us pray to the Lord.

C **For the sake of Christ's sacrifice on the tree of**

**the cross, heavenly Father, accompany them with Your Holy Spirit; protect them from harm, and give them wisdom in all circumstances.**

P For ourselves and the Church around the world as we seek to produce true spiritual fruit, let us pray to the Lord.

C **For the sake of Christ's sacrifice on the tree of the cross, heavenly Father, assure us that we are Your pleasant planting; forgive our errors, and send us to serve in faithfulness and love.**

P These and any other things You would have us ask, heavenly Father, grant to us for the sake of the sufferings and death of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C **Amen.**

### Collect of the Day

P Be our light in the darkness, O Lord, and in Your great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of Your only Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

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.**

### Benedicamus

L Let us bless the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

### Benediction

L The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the T Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve us.

C **Amen.**

### Hymn to Depart - LSB 430 My Song Is Love Unknown

My song is love unknown,  
My Savior's love to me,  
Love to the loveless shown  
That they might lovely be.  
Oh, who am I  
That for my sake

My Lord should take  
Frail flesh and die?

Why, what hath my Lord done?  
What makes this rage and spite?  
He made the lame to run,  
He gave the blind their sight.  
Sweet injuries!  
Yet they at these  
Themselves displease  
And 'gainst Him rise.

Here might I stay and sing,  
No story so divine!  
Never was love, dear King,  
Never was grief like Thine.  
This is my friend,  
In whose sweet praise  
I all my days  
Could gladly spend!

Text: Public domain

### Acknowledgments

Service of Prayer and Preaching from Lutheran Service Book. Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Created by Lutheran Service Builder © 2018 Concordia Publishing House.

## BULLETIN NOTES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### COVID-19 Response Plan

Zion, along with most other congregations in our area, is joining in the effort to contain the virus while also taking care of the ongoing ministry and the needs that increase during these times.

### Service Times:

For now, the 8am Sunday and 7pm Wednesday services will be livestreamed on our Facebook page and will be available for viewing later. You may join the livestream ten minutes prior to the start time. During the time before the service, please feel free to post a comment of greeting to your fellow worshippers, perhaps by sharing the peace or with a simple "hello."

[Help From the Lord](#) - Please [click here](#) to download an at-home Bible study of Psalm 121 adapted by Pastor Stuckwisch. It is also included in this printable handout

**Devotion Material** is available for pickup in the church office.

**Pastoral Visitation:** While visitation at hospitals, nursing homes, and other facilities are limiting visits at this time, your pastors will work with these institutions to provide care as needed. We will also use discretion in making home visits, but are always available to respond in cases of emergency.

**Office Hours:** The church office is open as normal to accomplish essential tasks.

**Offerings** may be mailed to or dropped off at the office. The church office can also help you arrange for giving your offering via electronic/ACH transfer.

**Altar Flowers** –To place flowers on the altar please sign up on the flower chart in the hallway across from the sacristy.

### **Zion Boards/Organizations**

**The Zion Foundation Board** will be accepting grant requests again this year. Requests may come from any board, committee, or member of Zion Lutheran Church; however, grants must be approved by the appropriate board. In an effort to help people better understand and to guide them through the process for grant requests, the Zion Foundation Board has developed a grant application form. This form has all the key information needed for the review, plus it also has a narrative of helpful hints of items. Please be very specific about the amount requested (have a quote sheet if possible) and the way the requested money will be used. Also work with the board that will be responsible for the grant. The Zion Foundation Board is currently accepting grant requests for the 2020 year. The request should be submitted no later than May 3, 2020. All requests must be made in writing on the grant application form and delivered to the church office or the foundation president, Matt Meyer. Grant application forms are available in the church office.

**Groundwork Guatemala** connects the lost to the Living Word, Jesus Christ, then equips them for a life of service to their Savior and Lord. A team is forming among area Lutherans for a mission trip August 22-29. The team will serve alongside the Guatemalan missionaries as they teach and mentor youth and adults in that country. For more information, please call the church office at 812-522-1089 or contact DB Horton or Andy & Misty Royalty.

**It's time to order Easter Lilies for the altar.** Despite all the changes currently being undergone, we will continue with the Easter Lilies. To place your order, use the forms that are in the narthex on the table by the greeting cards. Please complete the form, include payment, fold or put into an envelope and place in narthex box #245 or give to Mary Lou Shollenberger. Easter Lilies will be \$8.00 each this year. The deadline for ordering is March 29, 2020.

**Zion Sunday School will have an Easter Egg Hunt** on Easter Sunday, April 12, @ 9:15 am Items are needed for filling the eggs! If you are able to support this "hunt" with a bag or two of individually wrapped candy or small trinkets that would fit inside an egg, there will be boxes in the narthex and the kitchen marked Easter Egg Hunt. If you prefer to make a cash donation, please give to Sandra Franke or Jana Gray in person. All donations are needed no later than Sunday, March 29. Thank you!

**Camp Lakeview Scholarship Applications are in the Narthex.** Sponsored by Zion Women's Fellowship-LWML. Pick one up and return by Sun., Apr 26.

**The Lutheran Witness Magazine** is available monthly on the shelf in the narthex. Please pick up a copy to take home. There are many great articles plus a section on Indiana District news. All excellent reading. Enjoy!

**Women's Bible Study** is cancelled. Please read the last 2 chapters on your own to complete the study. We will regroup in the fall. Thanks to all who participated. - Sherry & Marie

### **Youth**

**No Youth Night** on Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup>.

### **Schools**

#### **Zion Lutheran School**

**Zion Lutheran School 2020-2021 school year registration is open.** Our programs consist of classes ranging from 2-year old children through kindergarten and an extend care offerings in both the 2020 summer & 2020-2021 school year, throughout each week. **We ask that anyone who tends to enroll a child in one of these programs please do so as soon as possible!**

**We need your help!** – don't forget the Zion Lutheran School "Reading Curriculum Sponsors" Fund Drive. The goal is \$15,000 to help purchase our new reading curriculum materials for the upcoming school year. We are currently at \$550 toward the goal. If you can be a sponsor, at any of these levels, please make your check out to "Zion Lutheran School Reading Curriculum" and get it to the school. **Help our ZLS children become proficient at their reading skills!**

#### **ZLS Fundraising Opportunities:**

- **Papa John's Pizza** – besides ZLS getting 10% of your order cost, you get a 30% discount. Use promo code ZIONLS30
- **Freddy's Steakburgers** – Every Monday through March & April. Show the Freddy's flyer (found on the church website) when ordering.

**Donations to the Zion Lutheran School SGO** account can be done by visiting the website <http://www.lutheransgo.org/donate/> or sending in a completed donor form to "The Lutheran SGO of Indiana" in Fort Wayne. These donation forms are available at Zion in the church narthex and the church & school offices.

# Psalm 121

## Help from the Lord, Israel's Watchman

(*The Lutheran Study Bible*, pages 972–973)

### Look

In Psalm 120 the pilgrim begins his journey surrounded by enemies. In Psalm 133 he finishes his journey surrounded by his brothers and sisters in the faith. The psalms in between these two are arranged in pairs. This psalm speaks of God's help. Its companion, Psalm 132, also speaks of God's help. He is our Keeper, especially when we are surrounded by uncertainties.

Verse 1 *"To the hills"*—The hills were dangerous, providing homes for robbers and wild animals, as well as places of idolatry. Is the psalmist looking to the hills in fear? But the hills also symbolized strength and safety. Is the psalmist looking to the hills for help?

### Ponder

1. In verse 1, the psalmist asks, "From where does my help come?" How does he answer the question in verse 2?
2. Verses 3 and 4 tell us that God does not sleep. Read 1 Kings 18:20-40. Note especially verse 27. What does it mean for you that God does not need to be awakened but always hears our prayers?
3. What comfort do verses 5–7 give us, especially in what seems like uncertain times?
4. Count the number of times that "keep" or "keeper" occur in vv. 4-8. The Hebrew carries the sense of guarding, watching over,

observing. A keeper in biblical times was one who stood guard at the city gates or watched from the walls to guard against the enemy. How does the Lord watch over and—by extension—protect you?

5. Most often we ask the Lord to watch over our "coming and going." The Hebrew, however, reverses the word order: "your going out and your coming in" (verse 8). Can you tell why? (Hint: Consider that, in the context of this psalm, the people were in the presence of God at the temple in Jerusalem.)

### Apply

6. Historically, the words "watch over your going out and your coming in" (verse 8) were used in the Baptismal liturgy. How is this phrase appropriate in the context of your Baptism?
7. Today, the Lord makes His presence known to us in His Word. In these coronavirus days, that Word comes to us in some non-traditional ways like the live streaming of services. What else can you do to increase your time in the presence of God through His Word?
8. Is it helpful to you to describe your life as a pilgrimage?

*The Lord promises to watch over us at all times. And with the almighty Maker of heaven and earth watching over us, what do we have to fear?*

Adapted from *Life By His Word*, © 2009 Concordia Publishing House. All rights reserved. Used by permission.