

Martin Luther Chapel – Pennsauken, NJ  
Third Sunday After Pentecost - 30 June 2019

Color: Green

Proprs: 8

Divine Service: I

Proper Preface: Common

Sermon Text: Luke 9: 51 – 62.

Sermon Title: “Set your face toward Jerusalem”

My brothers and sisters in Christ, the Holy Spirit **calls us to pay attention** to the fact that our risen Lord’s **face was set** toward Jerusalem.

 St Luke’s records in this morning’s reading

 the **final turning away** from ministry in Galilee and Judah

 **toward**

- † rejection,
- † opposition,
- † abandonment
- † and death
- † in Jerusalem.

 Yet, Jesus

 did not turn toward Jerusalem with

- † reservation,
- † fatalism,
- † defeatism
- † or hopelessness

 but with

- † **love and mercy,**
- † **confidence and strength**
- † all of which rested on **faith in**
  - ‡ His God and our God,
  - ‡ His Father and our Father.

 He turned toward Jerusalem knowing what lay ahead for Him and His disciples:

 a self-righteous and self-justifying people that

- † rejected Him,
- † opposed His ministry,
- † denied His person,
- † and mocked and abused the divine mercy

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† that **God extended through His only begotten Son.**  
He **led His disciples** on the narrow path of righteousness that only  
He  
knew,  
could walk,  
and would **open wide** the Kingdom of God  
† through His **innocent suffering and death** on the  
cross,  
† His glorious **resurrection**  
† and **ascension** to the right hand of God.  
He **walked** it that time  
† as the humble, obedient and suffering servant of God  
for  
† you  
† and for me.

Jesus had

taught with **power and authority** like no other man  
and **performed many mighty works** in the presence of  
† His disciples,  
† great crowds  
† and before private gatherings up to this point.  
Each and every **word and deed** shown forth the dawning light of  
His **Messiahship**  
and His **crucial work of salvation**  
† **upon** the cross  
† **outside** the city of radial peace.  
Ahead of Him was  
the enmity of sinful men,  
the doubt of unbelieving men,  
the hatred of murderous men  
and yet He **did not look back** – back to  
† the safe life of a carpenter,  
† the intellectual life of a rabbi,

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- † the comfort and joy of a wedding in Canaan,
- † the feeding of thousands after a satisfying day of preaching and teaching,
- † or the beckoning of parents and masters to come quickly for a loved one was deathly sick or demon possessed.

 It would have been:

-  much easier to journey to where the crowds gathered to gratify their curiosity and fill their bellies;
-  much more peaceful to go away from Jerusalem and preach and teach in the wilderness;
-  more profitable to heal the sick and cast out the demons;
-  the preferred way of man but those many roads that would lead back to
  - † tranquility,
  - † acceptance,
  - † or adoration would never
    - ‡ deliver mankind from the wages of their sins,
    - ‡ gain us freedom from the tyranny and bondage of the evil one,
    - ‡ or eternal peace and joy in the presence of the one true God.

 No, the road to Jerusalem was neither:

-  Wide;
-  Safe;
-  nor easy.

 It was **the road God chose** for Him while men,

-  even His own disciples,
-  tried to divert Him from it onto a road of
  - † fleshly personal glory,
  - † political power,
  - † and unbelievable wealth and position.

 His **exodus was directed** by the God the Father.

 All other roads were

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 deadly temptations of the evil one  
 who sought to divert, disorient and destroy  
† His ministry,  
† His mission,  
† and His people.

Jesus **set His face like flint** just as **He had hardened the prophet Ezekiel's forehead** for his ministry.

 Every step He took  
 He not only **strode into the spiritual tempest**  
 but walked **carrying the sins and iniquities** of those who  
† believed in Him  
† and those who refused to believe in Him  
† from the beginning of time  
† to the Last Day.

 He **suffered the blows** of  
 temple guard,  
 religious leaders  
 and Roman soldiers  
 for those who received the truth that **He is their Messiah**  
 and those who denied **He was their Messiah.**

 He **suffered** the  
 lies and slander,  
 mocking and jeers,  
 the waging of heads and the grinding of teeth  
 against Him in our place  
 so that we would not bear  
† the curse of the Law  
† and the divine wrath for our sinful works

He **comes to us** – His brothers and sisters - not as the suffering servant  
but as the **victorious King of Kings** and the **Prince of Peace.**

 His **nail-pierced hands and feet,**  
 His **spear pierced-side,**

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 and **His thorn-scarred head**  
 identify Him as the Suffering Servant  
 who **successfully traveled** through the physical Jerusalem,  
 **hung upon** the cursed tree where He  
 **offered the final and perfect sacrifice**  
 for the salvation of mankind,  
 **laid** in the tomb for three days as He foretold,  
 **arose and came** to His disciples  
 **assuring them** that He did all this for you and for me,  
 not with gold and silver but with His precious body and blood.

Yet, He **must work today** while it is still light –

 the time of grace  
 where lost and despairing souls  
 He is snatching out of the darkness  
 for there is a time coming when divine judgment will  
† enshroud and overwhelm unrepentant sinners  
† on that Last Day.

 He has **fought** the good fight,  
 **defeated** all our foes  
 on the cursed tree,  
 and now **bids us to work** with Him  
 as He **unites heaven and earth** in Himself here  
† in time  
† and there in eternity.

My brothers and sisters in Christ, our Lord and our God

 **stands** in our midst,  
 **calling and commanding** us to arise,  
 turn our faces towards Him,  
 and follow Him into the Father's fields  
 for there is much work to be done  
 and the day is growing late.  
 He **warns against** looking

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 back and seeking those things  
 that gratify our flesh  
 but fail to advance His kingdom.

God **calls us to pray** for divine wisdom, courage and strength:

 for **His appointed leaders** at this Chapel that are preparing the slate of candidates for election for the 2019 – 2021 PPC even as they bring to a conclusion their labors as 2017 – 2019 PPC officers.

 Jesus **calls you and me to pray** in His name for **divine wisdom, courage and strength** to identify and submit the names of those we believe most qualified for each of the PPC offices.

 He **calls us to pray in His name** that divine wisdom, courage and strength be given

 those called as members of the nomination committee

 and those who are called to be on the ballot

 that they prayerfully consider His call

 and make themselves available to be

 prayed for by us

 and as You will

 chosen through your and my vote

 for the vital and demanding work

 **He ordains to them to do**

 during the next term.

 He **calls us to pray in His name** that when we gather to elect His chosen PPC leadership we would faithfully discharge the

 responsibility and honor

 **He has placed into our hands.**

 He **calls us to pray for wisdom, courage, strength and love** that

 we set our faces toward Him,

 making our time, talent and treasure available

 as His chosen 2019 – 2021 leadership

 calls upon us to work on various

 boards,

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† committees  
† and working groups.

 He **calls us to pray to Him that the Holy Spirit would refresh**

 those who step down from their offices  
 that they would be revived for leadership  
 at a future date  
 even as they continue to serve in other ways.

 He **calls us to pray** for those

 He is **preparing for future leadership**  
 that have recently joined His family here  
 and those that will join us in the coming  
† days,  
† weeks,  
† months  
† and years.

 He has **promised us**, His children – you and me – the Holy Spirit

 that we would be faithful and true to our calling  
 in the face of  
† opposition and rejection,  
† abundance and want,  
† sunlight and shadow,  
† and spiritual calm or tempest.

Rejoice and set your face on Jesus.

 Our King's face is **set toward the heavenly Jerusalem**

 and He has **walked this path** before with our

 parents,  
 grandparents  
 and all the saints  
 that now rest in glory.

 He who has begun this good work in us will bring it to completion  
on the last day.