

Immanuel (Augsburg) Lutheran Church  
Shobnier, Illinois  
Easter 5A  
May 10, 2020  
John 14:1-14

God Builds a House---For You

“In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.” (John 14:2-3 ESV)

Dear Fellow Redeemed,

Alleluia! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

David wanted to build a house for God, but God said, “the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house.” (2 Sam. 7:11). He went on to say, “He [David’s descendent] shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.” (2 Sam. 7:13). Of course, we see this fulfilled at first by Solomon when he built the first temple in Jerusalem. But God’s promise is ultimately fulfilled in David’s greater Son, our Lord Jesus. For He is the One who promises that He is preparing a place for you so that you may dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

And yet, even with such promises ringing in our ears, we wonder if or how that could be. After all, there is much to disturb and distract us from Jesus and His promises. It seems that the devil is in control as the world appears to be spiraling downward faster and faster. Morality is taking a nosedive. The culture grows increasingly hostile to Christianity. The world, our country, the economy, the Church, our families, even our lives seem to be falling apart. We are beset by aches and pains, trials and afflictions, as well as the constant threat of a nasty virus. We suffer loss of many kinds resulting in grief and sorrow, including not being able to gather as God’s people in God’s House and not being able to see our mothers for whatever reason. And, of course, there’s our own sin. Whether we struggle against it or submit all too easily, our sin weighs us down and troubles our hearts. Even if we try to deny it, it still leads us away from our Shepherd, the very One who calls us by name, the very One who laid down His life for the sheep and took it up again, the very One who is building a house for you.

And this house is unlike anything we see in this world. For not only is this house being built for you, but you also have a part in the house and are a part of the house. For it is a spiritual house. It has Jesus Himself as the foundation (1 Cor. 3:11), along with “the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom . . . you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.” (Eph. 2:19-22). And what are the building blocks of this house? You are (1 Pet. 2:5), along with every child of God.

You see, you are not what you once were. “At one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.” (Eph. 5:8). You were lost, but now are found (Luke 15:6, 9, 24). You were dead in trespasses and sins, but have been raised to new life in Christ (Eph. 2:5). “Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.” (1 Pet. 2:10). Thus, God has made you living stones out of breathless clay by breathing into you the breath of life. He is building you to be His dwelling place, even as He builds an eternal dwelling for you.

For the eternal mansions are not a physical place, but life in the presence of Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who is the source of life—physical and spiritual. And while we don't see the fulness of that life yet, we do get a glimpse of it here. For in this, God's house, He gathers us as His people into His very presence. He gives you here what you need to live forever with Him. He forgives your sins, and gives you life and salvation. He feeds you with the very Body and Blood of Jesus who gave His life for you. This is how God builds His house—in you and with you.

Thus Jesus says, “Let not your hearts be troubled.” Though there is much to trouble our hearts, Jesus has overcome all of it. His words calm our troubled hearts and are backed up by the shedding of His holy, precious blood. For Jesus knows what it's like to have a troubled heart. Not only did He weep upon hearing that Lazarus had died, He also prayed that He might be spared the cup of suffering He was about to endure. Yes, Jesus is fully able to sympathize with your trials, tribulations, and temptations. Indeed, He has overcome every temptation and has taken every trial and tribulation upon Himself. He who had no sin of His own, has borne your trouble, your woes, your very sin and guilt, in His own flesh. This One has taken your sin and its consequences on His shoulders and suffered the death you so richly deserve.

This One who has gone through every trouble, every sadness, and every woe, has gone into the jaws of death for you. He rested in the tomb. He proclaimed His victory in hell. He has risen from the dead for you. He has ascended to the right hand of His Father, where He reigns forever and ever.

And as He sits at the right hand of His Father, Jesus intercedes for you before His Father. And this is good news for you because you know His Father is well-disposed toward Him. Not only does the Father say so at Jesus' Baptism and His Transfiguration, but He demonstrates it to us in Christ's resurrection from the dead. Furthermore, Christ and His Father are one - one is essence, one in purpose, one in salvation. They are of one mind and one will. They desire you to live with them forever.

So, “let not your heart be troubled.” For though we live in a world of constant striving and constant trouble, we have relief because we are not of the world. Heaven is our home. We are but passing through this wilderness on our way to the Promised Land, where our Lord Jesus has gone to prepare a place for you.

And the place He prepares for you is an abiding place where you “will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.” (Ps. 23:6). Living in His presence, you will abide with Him at God’s right hand, even as you now pray for Him to abide with you. And not to worry, Jesus indicates that there is plenty of room in heaven for you to abide. You won’t be confined to a mansion or a room. You will abide in the presence of the Lord of hosts, the angels, and the saints who have gone before us.

And where Jesus is, there is your heart. And where your heart is, there is your treasure. You are no longer your own; you have been bought with a price. Jesus has shed His blood for you and died for you so that you would be His child. He endured the shame and pain of the cross so you could live with Him forever. Therefore, “you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession.” (1 Pet. 2:9). Having been baptized into Christ, you have peace with God and victory over death itself. Yes, Christ Jesus has done everything necessary for your salvation. Furthermore, He says, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” So “let not your hearts be troubled,” your sins are forgiven. “Let not your hearts be troubled,” your Savior is preparing a place for you and you for the place so that you will dwell with Him and His Father forever. You have Christ’s Word on it.

Alleluia! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia! Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Rev. Timothy J. Landskroener