

I Am With Thee



Why is light given to one in misery,
and life to the bitter in soul,
who long for death, but it does not come,
and dig for it more than hidden treasures;
who rejoice exceedingly,
and are glad when they find the grave?

Why is light given to one who cannot see the way.
whom God has fenced in?
For my sighing comes like my bread,
and my groanings are poured out like water.
Truly the thing that I fear comes upon me,
and what I dread befalls me.

I am not at ease, nor am I quiet;
I have no rest; but trouble comes.

*Still, still with thee, when purple morning breaketh,
When the bird waketh, and the shadows flee;
Fairer than morning, lovelier than daylight,
Dawns the sweet consciousness, I am with thee.*

Only a gentle swish
Where waves would touch the land
no wind no turbulence
along this wall arranged by man
dividing land from sea

houses sit silent near the water's edge
their calm precariousness like our peace
hoisted on stilts
like mokojumbies in the carnival

listening the ocean's gentle murmur
hearing its angry wail
what seems like decades now
when death rode loud and furious
on the hissing waves

From storm and earthquake Lord
deliver us
and us
and us

*Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee.
He never will suffer the righteous to fall: He is at thy right hand.
Thy mercy, Lord, is great; and far above the heav'ns.
Let none be made ashamed that wait upon Thee.*

Now a word came stealing to me,
my ear received the whisper of it.
Amid thoughts from visions of the night,
when deep sleep falls on mortals,
dread came upon me, and trembling
which made all my bones shake.
A spirit glided past my face;
the hair of my flesh bristled.
It stood still,
but I could not discern its appearance.
A form was before my eyes;
there was silence, then I heard a voice:
'Can mortals be righteous before God?
Can human beings be pure before their maker?'

For misery does not come from the earth,
nor does trouble sprout from the ground;
but human beings are born to trouble
just as sparks fly upward.
As for me, I would seek God,
and to God I would commit my cause.

*Be still, my soul: the Lord is on your side.
Bear patiently the cross of grief or pain;
leave to your God to order and provide;
in every change God faithful will remain.
Be still, my soul: your best, your heavenly friend
through thorny ways leads to a joyful end.*

Please Stand

Leader: My stock lies dead, and no increase
Doth my dull husbandry improve:
All: **O let thy graces without cease
Drop from above!**

Leader: Death is still working like a mole,
And digs my grave at each remove:
All: **Let grace work too, and on my soul
Drop from above.**

Leader: O come! for thou dost know the way.
Or if to me thou wilt not move,
All: **Remove me, where I need not say,
Drop from above.**

1. All (Green Hymnal 343)
**Guide me ever, great Redeemer,
Pilgrim through this barren land.
I am weak, but you are mighty;
Hold me with your pow'rful hand.
Bread of heaven, bread of heaven,
Feed me now and evermore,
Feed me now and evermore.**

2. As indicated
Women: **Open now the crystal fountain
Where the healing waters flow;
Men:** **Let the fire and cloudy pillar
Lead me all my journey through.
All:** **Strong deliv'rer, strong deliv'rer,
Shield me with your mighty arm,
Shield me with your mighty arm.**

3. All
**When I tread the verge of Jordan,
Bid my anxious fears subside;
Death of death and hell's destruction,
Land me safe on Canaan's side.
Songs and praises, songs and praises,
I will raise forevermore,
I will raise forevermore.**

Please Sit

Is it like this
In death's other kingdom
Walking alone
At the hour when we are
Trembling with tenderness
Lips that would kiss
Form prayers to broken stone

*Even before we call on your name to ask you, O God,
When we seek for the words to glorify you, you hear our prayer;
Unceasing love, O unceasing love, surpassing all we know.
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.*

*Even with darkness sealing us in, we breathe your name,
And through all the days that follow so fast, we trust in you;
Endless your grace, O endless your grace, beyond all mortal dream,
Both now and forever, and unto ages and ages. Amen*

DECEMBER 26, 2004

*Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm, for love is strong as death.
Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it.*

AUGUST 29, 2005

*My father has crossed over Jordan,
and my mother has crossed over too;
my sisters and brothers are trav'lin'
and I am go'n' there too.*

*I'm go'n' walk thro' the streets of the city,
and my Captain is gone on before,
I'm go'n' sit down on the banks of the river
and I'll never come here no more.*

*I'm a pilgrim and a stranger
while in this world I roam,
I heard of a city called heaven,
I started to make it my home.*

*One morning bright and early
I'm go'n' bid farewell to the shore,
I'm go'n' to fly right-a up in heaven
and never come here no more.*

*I'm go'n' walk thro' the streets of the city,
and my Captain is gone on before,
I'm go'n' sit down on the banks of the river
and I'll never come here no more.*

OCTOBER 8, 2005

*I'm a pilgrim and a stranger,
I can tarry but a night;
Do not detain me, for I am going
To where the fountains are ever flowing;
I'm a pilgrim, and I'm a stranger,
I can tarry but a night.*

*There the glory is shining;
My longing heart is there;
Here in this country dark and dreary
I have wandered weary:*

*I'm a pilgrim, a stranger,
And I can tarry but a night;
A pilgrim, a stranger,
I tarry but a night.*

*My Redeemer is the light
Of the city to which I'm going
My Redeemer is the light;
There is no sorrow, nor any sighing,
Nor any sinning, nor any dying.
Of the city to which I'm going
My Redeemer is the light.*

Lift me, Lord, for I fall and nothing stays me,
loveless and heedless, without faith or fear.
I long to rise but lie unmoving here:
the very self that wishes disobeys me.

Though one, my self divides and then betrays me:
at once both dead, alive; sad, full of cheer;
not able -- though I can -- to persevere,
I flee the sin that tangles and delays me.

So obstinate am I, so steeled in will,
that fear of being lost and fear to lose you
have never yet dissuaded me from ill.

Work, then, your power and mercy so I choose you,
since I know some who mend each day -- and still
find in myself but fresh desire to bruise you.

C A R O L

In my dream, you do not leave us
Instead as we are sinking, sinking
You dive down to us in the mournful black
Water, and pull us up into sweet air,
up to the rising sun

In this dream, you cannot leave us
Something holds you and keeps you there
Until all souls, all souls are remembered
Until finally love, love
Only love

*Softly and gently, dearly ransomed soul,
in my most loving arms I now enfold thee.
And o'er the purging waters as they roll,
I poise thee and I lower thee and hold thee.*

*And with great care I dip thee in the lake;
and thou without a sob or a resistance
Dost through the flood thy rapid passage take,
sinking deep, deeper into the dim distance.*

*Farewell but not forever, pilgrim dear, be brave and patient on thy bed of sorrow,
Swiftly shall pass the night of trial here, and I shall come and wake thee on the morrow.*

The thought of my affliction and my homelessness is wormwood and gall!
My soul continually thinks of it and is bowed down within me.
But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope:
The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, God's mercies never come to an end;
They are new every morning; Great is your faithfulness.

Please Stand

1. All (Blue Hymnal 771)

**Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father; there is no shadow of turning with thee;
thou changest not, thy compassions, they fail not; as thou hast been, thou forever wilt be.**

Refrain (all)

**Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness! Morning by morning new mercies I see;
all I have needed thy hand hath provided; great is thy faithfulness, Lord unto me!**

2. Men

**Summer and winter and springtime and harvest, sun, moon, and stars in their courses above
join with all nature in manifold witness to thy great faithfulness, mercy and love. Refrain**

3. Women

**Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth, thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;
strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow, blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside! Refrain**

Please Sit

I will say to God, Do not condemn me;
let me know why you contend against me.
Does it seem good to you to oppress,
to despise the work of your hands
and favor the schemes of the wicked?
Do you have eyes of flesh?
Do you see as humans see?
Are your days like the days of mortals,
or your years like human years?

*Be still, my soul: your God will undertake
to guide the future, as in ages past.
Your hope, your confidence let nothing shake;
all now mysterious shall be bright at last.
Be still, my soul: the waves and winds still know
the Christ who knew them while he dwelt below.*

Your hands fashioned and made me;
and now you turn and destroy me,
Remember that you fashioned me like clay;
and will you turn me to dust again?

L A R G O

Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind:
“Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?
Gird up your loins with strength,
I will question you, and you shall declare to me.

Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?
Tell me, if you have understanding.
Who determined its measurements—surely you know!
Or who stretched the line upon it?
On what were its bases sunk,
or who laid its cornerstone
when the morning stars sang together
and all the angels shouted for joy?”

*Your angels, O Christ, stand in awe by the throne of your glory.
Being illumined by the outpouring of your light,
they are among the singers of your choir and the servants of your counsel.
They are sent down by you to illumine our souls.*

Jesus said, "I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.

"I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me;

"I have said these things to you while I am still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid."

*We shall walk through the valley in peace.
If Jesus, himself shall be our leader, we shall walk through the valley in peace.*

*There will be no trials there.
If Jesus, himself shall be our leader, we shall walk through the valley in peace.*

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid,
that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

A voice cries out:
"In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.
Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

While gentle silence enveloped ALL THINGS,
and night in its swift course was now half gone,
the almighty Word leaped from the royal throne,
into the midst of the land that was doomed,
and touched heaven while standing on the earth.

G O D M A D E F L E S H

1. All (Green Hymnal 61)

**The hills are bare at Bethlehem,
No future for the world they show;
Yet here new life begins to grow,
From earth's old dust a greenwood stem.**

2. Choir

*The stars are cold at Bethlehem,
No warmth for those beneath the sky;
Yet here the radiant angels fly,
And joy burns new, a fi'ry gem.*

3. Choir

*The heart is tired at Bethlehem,
No human dream unbroken stands;
Yet here God comes to mortal hands,
And hope renewed cries out: "Amen!"*

Do not beguile my heart,
Because thou art
My power and wisdom. Put me not to shame,
Because I am
Thy clay that weeps, thy dust that calls.

Thou art the Lord of glory:
The deed and story
Are both thy due: but I a silly fly
That live or die
According as the weather falls.

Art thou justice, Lord?
Shows not thy word
More attributes? Am I all throat or eye,
To weep or cry?
Have I no parts but those of grief?

*Alone with thee, amid the mystic shadows,
The solemn hush of nature newly born;
Alone with thee in breathless adoration,
In the calm dew and freshness of the morn.*

*Still, still with thee! As to each newborn morning,
A fresh and solemn splendor still is giv'n,
So does this blessed consciousness, awaking,
Breathe each day nearness unto thee and heav'n.*

*So shall it be at last in that bright morning,
When the soul waketh and the shadows flee;
O in that hour, fairer than daylight dawning,
Shall rise the glorious thought, I am with thee.*

Gracious God, in these troubled times,
We reach out to you to grant strength,
comfort and guidance to those left
abandoned, helpless and full of doubt.
Almighty One, you come as a light
into the world, that none should abide in darkness.
Let your light shine,
like the brightness of a midday sun,
enveloping all people,
within your arms,
lifting them up to see your light
and to feel your presence.

Amen

All Sing

**Be still my soul: the hour is hastening on when we shall see the coming of the Lord,
when disappointment, grief, and fear are gone, sorrow forgot, love's purest joys restored.
Be still, my soul: when change and tears are past, all safe and blessed we shall meet at last.**

HOLY TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

Advent Devotion ☩ December 18, 2005, 4:30 PM

Adult Choir

Soprano: Sharon Andersen, Lois Eid, Sandy Hoverson, Amy Johnson, Pam Kildahl, Mary Ellen Olson, Stella Townsend • *Alto:* Carol Johnson, Lindsey Lane*, Vicki Mann, Korla Masters, Susan Nixon, Cathryn Olson, Allene Qualheim*, Laura Simms, Stephanie Sulzbach • *Tenor:* Paul Eid, Josef Fortier, Peter Johnson, Mike Mann*, Bob Peterson • *Bass:* Clifford Brown, Bill Capman, Bob Hulteen, John Sulzbach, Wayne Vetter

**in absentia*

Trinity Singers

Soprano: Andrea Hansen, Ann Schrooten*, Stephanie Sulzbach • *Alto:* Jane Aldrich, Jody Liedholm*, Gretchen Lund*, Liz Rudrud • *Tenor:* Bob Aldrich, Jonathan Flak** • *Bass:* David Broberg, Peter Johnson

**in absentia, **guest*

Participants

Mary Lindell, Reader; Julie Lindorff, Organ and Piano; Dan Macintosh, Cello; Nina Olsen, Clarinet; Lowell Prescott, Conductor; Victoria Wilgocki, Reader.

Music (in order of appearance): *Finlandia* • *Still, Still With Thee* (excerpt), Fred Gramann, Text: Harriet Beecher Stowe • *Cast Thy Burden Upon the Lord*, Felix Mendelssohn • *Pilgrim's Hymn*, Stephen Paulus, Text: Michael Dennis Browne, Copyright © 1997 by Stephen Paulus and Michael Dennis Browne • *Set Me As a Seal*, René Clausen, Text: Song of Solomon • *Walk Through the Streets of the City*, arr. Undine Smith Moore, Text: Spiritual • *The Pilgrim*, arr. Leland Sateren, Text: Mary S. B. Shindler • *Carol from Five Bagatelles*, Gerald Finzi • *The Guardian's Farewell*, David Haas, Text: John Henry Newman • *Largo* from *Sonata in C major for Violin*, J. S. Bach • *Illumined By Your Light*, James E. Clemens, Text: Sisters of St. Basil the Great, Copyright © 1985 by the Sisters of St. Basil the Great, Uniontown, PA • *We Shall Walk Through the Valley*, arr. Undine Smith Moore, Text: Spiritual • *The Hills are Bare At Bethlehem*, arr. Ralph Johnson, Text: Royce J. Scherf, Copyright © 1978 Lutheran Book of Worship • *Still, Still With Thee* (excerpt)

Readings (in order of appearance): “Why is light given to one in misery” Job 3:20-26 • “Only a gentle swish” from *Crown Point* by Velma Pollard • “Now a word came stealing to me” Job 4:12-17 and 5:6-8 • “My stock lies dead, and no increase” from *Grace* by George Herbert • “Is it like this” from *The Hollow Men* by T. S. Eliot* • “December 26, 2004” from “Families welcome tsunami survivors” by Stella Dhlomo (afrika.com) • “August 29, 2005” from “New Orleans: Survivor's Stories” by Mike Mosedale (City Pages) • “October 8, 2005” from “The End of the World, Part III” by Matt Taibbi (Rolling Stone) • “Lift me, Lord” by Fray Miguel de Guevara, translated from the Spanish by Rhina P. Espallat • “In my dream, you do not leave us” from *Golden Door* by Dominique** • “The thought of my affliction” Lamentations 3:19-23 • “I will say to God, Do not condemn me” Job 10:2-5 • “Your hands fashioned and made me” Job 10:8-9 • “Then the Lord answered Job” Job 38:1-7 • “Jesus said, ‘I will ask the Father’” John 14:16-19, 25-27 • “Comfort, O comfort my people” Isaiah 40:1-5 • “While gentle silence enveloped all things” Wisdom of Solomon 18:14-16* • “Do not beguile my heart” from *Complaining* by George Herbert • “Gracious God, in these troubled times” by Barbara Ann Smith** • *Collected and edited by Larry L. Fleming. **New poetry dedicated to survivors of Hurricane Katrina.

A reception featuring cranberry steamed pudding immediately follows the service.