

Faithfulness

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Preacher: Pastor Tom Kraft

[0 : 0 0] Music Music Music Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Lord, we thank you for your presence.

[3 : 1 8] And we come to you this day expecting to receive your joy and your love. Shower down upon us, Lord, that we may be blessed by you and be a blessing in return.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. I'd like to invite you all to stand if you're able as we sing together, For All the Saints. May this you know, show the heart.

For all the saints Who from their labors rest Through thee my faith Before the world confess Thy name, O Jesus Be forever blessed Alleluia Alleluia Thou wast there right Their fortress and their mind

Thou, O Lord, the captain In the wealth of time Thou in the dark Is free the one to light Alleluia Alleluia O blessed communion Have all shift divine We feel we struggle May in glory shine Yeah, O Lord, the Lord Indeed for all are thine Alleluia Alleluia

From earth's wide bands From oceans Farthest coast Through gates of earth Streaming the countless coast Singeth to fall The sun and holy gust Alleluia Alleluia The Lord be with you And also with you Please be seated This morning As part of our worship We will be honoring all saints By remembering those who have passed away in our lives over the last year Some of you have turned in names And maybe there are a couple of you that have a loved one You'd like to have added to the list If you do, you have to right now Write it on a little piece of paper

[6 : 5 6] And hold it up And I'll come around and pick it up for you in a moment Okay? We wanted to point out some ministry opportunities As we give back to God You know, we're all called to serve in some way And to give And so we have clipboards going back for Seneca Street United Methodist Church We do a meal there once a month I also want to draw your attention to the ministry connection site So if you missed the clipboard A copy of it is back there But also opportunities to serve in other ways are back there as well We're highlighting today Nursery care And ushers and greeters And our church is in need of those different places So if you're willing and able Please prayerfully consider signing up for those ministries We are thankful for the rummage sale that was yesterday The UMW Those ladies worked really, really hard And lots of work But boy, what a blessing Lots of stuff went out And all of that money goes to support missions So we're thankful and grateful for all of their service as well

So what are you all thankful for this morning? Yeah So keep praying and that's a thank you Yes What else are we thankful for this morning?

What a praise in God Welcome Welcome Welcome to Linda Wheeling Her mother-in-law Yeah, absolutely wonderful to have family come in Yeah Oregon Outstanding Woohoo!

Yay! Absolutely Thank you Tom What are you thankful for? Thank you Tom What are you thankful for? I want to thank everybody for praying for baby Noah Noah He's excellent condition Amen Amen Amen Yeah Thank you for giving my wife and I 57 years Thanks be to God Wonderful Wonderful Wonderful So many praises What else are we thankful for?

What would you like to praise God for today? I want to thank you for taking some individuals to the Jesus prom Oh, you get to take some individuals to the Jesus prom She works wonderful That's a great idea Yes, up there April, my daughter was a son of a month And she was a son of a year of a year of a year of a year So the new job for April is excellent That's great What else?

[9 : 31] What else? Anyone have anything else they'd like to I'm personally thankful for an extra hour of sleep I don't know about you all I was like, woohoo! Yeah Anyone else? Well, we are just so blessed You know, we come here to worship because we know that God is good And so as we prepare our hearts to continue in worship And we offer up our offerings today in service And in our gifts, tithes and offerings Reflect on just how good God is in your life There you have to pursue all those things Why ■ W hart It doesn't are eligible to be her Things like a week And so We see you in the future But you must have gone for ...

Well, it's never really close So I hope to speak to you through this Thank you.

Many lives are empty, so many walk alone, weary, sad, and longing for all.

Reaching out for something they cannot seem to find, or let your love illuminate the pathways to my side.

This is my command, that you take your brother's hand, and love him as I at first loved you, love you.

[11 : 33] Let the warmth of your embrace give him strength to run the race. May your love's word be the evidence of grace.

Children crying longer as parents strive for bread.

Still their hearts are lost and unfit. Children crying longer as parents strive for bread. Broken people wonder, oh God, where can you be?

Share my heart with those who weep, and bring them back to me. Give them hungry food to eat.

Give them more than tears to drink. Give the broken ones a place that Jesus needs. This is my command, that you take your brother's hand, and love him as I at first loved you, love you.

[13 : 00] Let the warmth of your embrace give him strength to run the race. May your love's word be the evidence of grace, of grace.

May your love's word be the evidence of grace.

May your love be the evidence of grace.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Lord, our very lives are evidence of your grace, of your love, and we give back to you a reflection of our gratitude and our great love for you.

[14 : 39] We pray that you will bless these gifts to continually transform this world in your name. Use these gifts to be a blessing in the world that we may use them to shine your light.

For it's in Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Please be seated. I wanted to share a concern in our church family.

Bob Schroeder has been put on hospice care and is declining quickly. That is the father of Ann Parrington. I'm wondering, I know we have many within the body.

Would you like to lift any up this morning? Any concerns to share? Everyone's doing really well?

Yeah, Judy. Healing for Barbara and her family. Yeah, Melissa. So, Aunt Wanda has a trach and is very sad, so lift her up for depression and everything that goes with that.

[15 : 52] Anyone else? Anyone else? Okay, well let's turn to our God in prayer.

Lord, you are a good God and we love you so. Lord, we pray to you that you will fill us, help us to know that you are there in times of struggle, in times of pain.

Guide us, set us on right paths. We pray, Lord, for the people who are needing your help physically. We pray for your healing touch to be upon them.

That your miracle will happen and manifest in powerful ways. That the healings will continue to occur. That they will take, have all the pain taken away. That the disease be healed.

We pray that you'll bind up anything that is broken and cast it out. We pray for your healing miracle upon the lives of the people. We pray for doctors and nurses and lift them up, that you will guide their hand and give them your wisdom.

[17 : 02] We pray for those in position of caregiver, that you'll give them your strength. You'll give them your comfort. You'll lift them up and encourage them. Lord, we pray for those who are in mourning.

Wrap them in your loving arms. Help them to know that you are there. Give them your comfort and your peace. Give them your strength. As people go through so many struggles and trials, Lord, we pray that you will fill their minds with your blessings.

Take away any doubts, any depression, any anxiety, any worry. And help them to trust in you.

Lord, we pray for our families. We pray that you'll have a covering of protection over our families. And you'll fill our families with your love, your goodness. Set our families on a path directed at you.

Drawn to you. Lord, we pray for those who don't know you. That you'll give them an open heart.

[18 : 23] Soften their hearts, Lord, and surround them with people who are willing to witness. Help us to be part of that community who is willing to be your disciples, to be your witnesses in this world.

So that others may know you. We pray, Lord, for the people. Lord, we pray for this church. Help us to move boldly in the direction you have set for us.

Help us to discern. Point the path in a powerful way. Give us as a body of Christ discernment. Fill us with your desire to know you more, to grow in our faith.

Lord, we pray for people who need healing in all different ways. In their body, their mind, their emotions, their spirit. For those who are downcast, lift them up.

Lord, you are a good God. God, help us never forget that. That you are here with us. Help us to praise your name in all times, in all things, in all ways.

[19 : 42] For it's in your name we pray. Amen. Now let's hear from the word of the Lord. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. The ship was caught by the storm and could not head into the wind, so we gave way to it and were driven along. As we passed to the lee of a small island, we were hardly able to make the lifeboat secure, so the men hoisted it aboard.

Then they passed ropes under the ship itself to hold it together because they were afraid we would run aground on the sandbars. They lowered the sea anchor and let the ship be driven along.

[20 : 56] We took such a violent battering from the storm that the next day they began to throw the cargo overboard. On the third day, they threw the ship's tackle overboard with their own hands. When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days and the storm continued to rage, we finally gave up all hope of being saved.

After they had gone a long time without food, Paul stood up before them and said, Men, you should have taken my advice not to sail from Crete. Then you would have spared yourselves this damage and loss.

But now I urge you to keep up your courage, because not one of you will be lost, only the ship will be destroyed. Last night an angel of the Lord God, to whom I belong and to whom I serve, stood beside me and said, Do not be afraid, Paul.

You must stand trial before Caesar, and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you. So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me.

Nevertheless, we must run aground on some island. This is the word of the Lord. Amen. Thank you, Terry. You've got to love Paul.

[22 : 08] I told you so. Don't you love people like that? Middle of a storm, middle of a hurricane, that's what we need. I told you so. Have you ever been in a storm?

I mean, how many of you have ever really ridden out a hurricane? Yeah, me too. I was all of probably eight years old, maybe a little different age. I don't remember exactly.

And we were down around Washington, D.C. and Maryland, some area. And we were in this kind of tent thing that my parents had that they used for a kitchen when they went camping.

There were seven of us in the tent, and we could all of a sudden hear the wind howling, and something was going on outside. We didn't have windows, so we couldn't see outside the tent. We just heard the sound of it, and finally, somewhere along the line, my dad said, Everybody grab a tent pole.

I don't know if he was hoping the tent would save us, or we'd save the tent. But we all grabbed the pole, seven of us on each pole, as we went about three foot in the air. Woo!

[23 : 12] And came down. What was that? After the storm passed over, we went outside and saw trees bigger than I could get my arm around, knocked down, and we found out we had been in a hurricane.

There were no cell phones or warning systems like that in place back then. It was just like, good luck. Being in a hurricane is not fun. Being in a storm is not fun.

Whether it's a storm like the ones we've seen in the last three or four months in our country that Mother Nature causes, or a storm that happens in our lives. These guys here are in a bad place.

They're in a hurricane, in a boat, in the middle of a sea. And every time they try to fix things, throw the cargo over, throw over the tackle, tie the boat together, everything they do seems to end in futility.

And then they even find that their lifeboat is slipping away. The lifeline. Sometimes things in life get so desperate, that we don't know what to do and we want to give up.

[24 : 17] It says, When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and the storm continued raging, we finally gave up all hope of being saved. Have you ever given up hope?

Have you ever felt like there was no answer to the storms of life you were facing? I remember being about 20 years old. I was working about 55 hours a week, and making about 150 bucks a week.

That wasn't a lot of money even back then. And I found that just to keep ourselves alive, Kraft macaroni and cheese, six nights a week, we were going slowly in debt.

We'd make 150, we'd spend 175, and I had no idea how to get out of that. I felt as if I was completely in a life out of control, getting the ulcers, not understanding what to do.

One day, a few years ago, I was reaching for the toothpaste as I was getting ready in the morning, and my arm went, and I said, that's not good.

[25 : 28] Then I felt this numbness in my leg, and I said, honey, give me three aspirins, call 911, I'm having a stroke. Have you ever gone to use your body in some way, and it doesn't work?

It doesn't respond, it doesn't do what it's supposed to do? And you're going, I have no idea. Is this for now? Is this forever?

Is this permanent? Is this short term? I've had no repercussions whatsoever. Our family makes decisions.

We see their lives going in the wrong direction. There's nothing we can do. And today's All Saints Day, when we celebrate those who have passed away from us, and nothing shocks our system like seeing someone who was a huge part of our lives no longer there with us.

And worst of all, you watch a football game on Thursday night, and just feel that feeling. You know what I'm talking about? No. It cannot be happening in front of the whole nation again.

[26 : 38] How many sacks can the jets get? Never mind. In the midst of it, we read Deuteronomy chapter 31, which says to us, Be strong and courageous.

Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you. Read this part with me. He will never leave you nor forsake you.

We're going to talk in these next few weeks about experiencing God, and sometimes experiencing God in surprising ways. Experiencing God here in our lives, but also experiencing God in our entire life in every way.

And learning from God what real love is, by the way, God shares that with us so that we can share it with others. Because God loves us. And God is present even in the midst of the storms of life.

In verse 23, Paul stood up and said, Last night, an angel of God to whom I belong and whom I serve stood beside me and said, Don't be afraid, Paul.

[27 : 42] I've still got a plan for you. You're going to stand before Caesar. Don't be afraid, which is what we want angels to say. When the angels appear and they don't say, Don't be afraid.

You better be shaken. Okay? But this angel said, What an angel is supposed to stay in the middle of a storm, Don't be afraid. God sends us hope.

They were to the point where they hadn't seen the stars or the sun in weeks. And they weren't eating anything and they had given up hope and God sent an angel to give them hope.

When you walk through a storm, hold your head up high and don't be afraid of the dark. When we were kids, that was the song we heard from Carousel.

Don't be afraid. Don't be afraid because your Lord, your God, is with us. He will not leave you nor forsake you.

[28 : 46] Even though the storm seems so huge. So one time, Jesus was with his disciples and he was healing a whole crowd of people that were coming to him and he said to the disciples, You know, you guys could go on ahead.

I'll take care of this. I got it. Head on the other side of the sea. So they got in the boat and started out in the sea and Jesus took care of the people and went up on a mountain and said to pray. In the meantime, these guys are out in a boat in the middle of the sea and the winds, it says, are against them and the waves are against them and they're like going, What?

Jesus is up on a mountain praying. Now, you would say, Well, Jesus was calming no storm. No, he didn't calm any storm. The storm kept going but all of a sudden they see Jesus strolling across the water.

Now, I don't know what you think but if I saw somebody strolling across the water in the middle of a storm, I wouldn't be going, Oh, praise God. I'd be going, Oh my gosh. Which is exactly what they said.

Whoa, it must be a ghost or something. This is scary. People don't walk on water. Unless it's ice, of course. We know about that in western New York. That's a whole different story, right? And they got to the boat.

[29 : 58] He got to the boat and they realized it was Jesus and so Peter says, Lord, hey, can I do it too? Maybe you don't realize it but Jesus said, sure.

And Peter got out of the boat and he walked on water. So Jesus wasn't the only one who walked on water. Peter walked on water because in the midst of the storm he trusted Jesus that the winds and the waves would not stop him.

God has incredible plans for us. He has an incredible plan for you and for me to transform the world we're in so that instead of living hopeless lives in fear and worry about all the things everybody is saying is going to happen, we can believe that God is still with us.

And when things are bad, instead of being part of the problem, we can be part of the solution and offer hope. You know, somebody found out that the phrase I use the most in this church is, it's okay.

They even made me a shirt. I should have wore it today. It says, it's okay. I probably should have 20 of them made up because I feel like that's what I say about 20 or 30 times a day.

[31 : 15] It's okay. I know. It's okay. I know you're feeling it. It's okay. I know right now, but it's okay. Not because it is okay, but because sometimes people need to hear that even in the midst of the storms and the problems, in the end, it is okay.

God is still with us. So sometimes I feel like an emotional shock absorber. Do you know what I mean? All the things that people say to me, all the problems, struggles, and troubles they have in their lives, because yes, we need God, but we also need people.

There's a little girl up in her crib and she cried out to Daddy, Daddy, Daddy, I'm afraid. And Daddy yelled back, Don't worry, honey. Jesus is with you. It was quiet for about 30 seconds and she said, That's nice, Daddy, but I want someone with flesh on him.

Yeah. And of course, that's part of why Jesus comforts us because he did have flesh on him, but he also wants us to be the flesh and blood, the hands and feet of Jesus. So, Paul, Paul gave courage because he still had faith.

In verse 25, he says, So keep up your courage, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me. And Paul, having courage, gave other people courage.

[32 : 38] Anybody know what that's a picture of up there? It looks like Jesus, doesn't it? But if you get up close to it, it's really made up of a thousand faces of people.

That's what it is. It's people. People like you and me. Because Jesus in this world is made up of people like you and me that are willing to stand in the gap when others are afraid.

In Ezekiel chapter 22, God said, Is there someone out there? Is there someone who will stand in the gap for me and keep the place safe?

Sometimes, love in a storm, see, you know, works, doesn't it? is just showing up like some of these people.

The keep and Sometimes in our lives, we all have pain, we all have sorrow.

[34 : 19] But if we are wise, we know that there's always tomorrow.

Lean on me when you're not strong, and I'll be your friend. I'll help you carry on, for it won't be long till I'm gonna need somebody to lean on.

I think that was a waterbed blown up. That's kind of a... You know, Houston taught us a wonderful lesson, didn't they? In the middle of the Bible belt, I have a feeling that their faith may have contributed to this.

I believe it did. That they didn't say this time, let's wait until the National Guard shows up. Let's wait until the professionals come in. Let's call out and figure out who's to blame for the fact we didn't get the help we needed.

They just went out in the streets and started doing it themselves. Same thing happened in Florida. Same thing happened in Puerto Rico. People just said, we're gonna do it ourselves. I want you to just picture that.

[35 : 39] You're in a house that you've lived in most of your life, and all of a sudden, everything you own, everything you know is getting swept away and destroyed. And you're wondering whether you're gonna get swept away yourself.

And you're desperate, but you don't know what to do. You have no idea where you should go and how to take care of it. And somebody comes along and says, get in the boat. Well, where are we going?

It doesn't matter. It's better than here. Get in the boat. And takes you someplace safe. You see, we could have ended the sermon with Jesus saying that he will be there for us, but it's more than that.

God wants us to show the love that we experience in God to the whole world because we're the face of Jesus.

Now, the problem is storms come. We don't control the weather. But some of the storms that happen in our lives are our own fault. Some people get so wrapped up with their agenda that they lose track of who they are and what they're supposed to be.

[36 : 43] If you read in this chapter, you'll find out that they were supposed to winter in the port, but they didn't want to. They said, no, we think we could get another jump to another port where it's a little nicer.

So if we just wait for a little gap in the weather, we can sneak across the sea in the weather where we're not supposed to be traveling and get to the next port. Paul said, I wouldn't do that.

And they said, yeah, you're not a sailor. Go sit down over there. You know, sometimes because we're so anxious to get that little extra edge, to get that little extra piece, or because we get confused about what our priorities should be, that we take a step out into the storms and don't realize we've made them ourselves.

There's a young man I was listening to who was trying to talk about priorities, and he was trying to talk about faithfulness. And he said that one time he had to make a choice.

His wife seemed to be having some health issues, but he was supposed to be at a youth conference. And I had to decide, does he take care of his wife or does he go to the youth conference?

[37 : 51] And she was heading to the hospital, so he figured she was taken care of, and he went to the youth conference, and she started hemorrhaging.

And he thought that he made the right decision. Of course, those older dogs are going, dude, dude, really, really. Now, he's a great man, and he's a good fellow, and he's a good pastor, and he's trying to do the best.

What I'm saying is, is good people who are trying to make the right decision sometimes make the wrong decision. Because we get our priorities mixed up. We're so worried about what we have to do right now, about what people are putting pressure on us about today, about what people are saying or doing, that we get anxious, and we step out into storms that we didn't really need to be in.

Mark chapter 8, you've heard this before, says, Whoever wants to save their life will lose it. Whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it. What good is it for someone to gain the whole world and lose their soul?

They're out in the sea, because they want to make a little jump to the next harbor. They throw their cargo overboard. They're not even thinking about what's going to happen when the boss finds out they threw all this stuff overboard.

[39 : 10] They throw the tackle. Now, I don't know if you think about that. They throw the tackle. That's the stuff that you steer the ship with, right? They throw that overboard, which means now they're just going wherever.

That's got to freak you out, right? They started to lose the lifeboat itself. Whatever it takes to save our lives.

We don't experience God sometimes because we get so distracted by other stuff that we're not aware of what the real priorities are in life. Where we should be focusing our attentions.

What we should be doing. Who's got their phone on? Come on, really? You didn't turn it off before church? You ever get a phone call at the wrong time?

Fortunately, this is Adrian. But imagine if it wasn't. I was meeting with somebody today or this week who was trying to be polite to me and didn't take a phone call from a family member who had a medical emergency.

[40 : 23] I was in the dentist's office with my head back like this. They're drilling on my teeth, you know? They got it fixed. They said 11 cavities and pull a tooth. So I might not be talking for a while. I don't know. Right? So he's literally, he's drilling my teeth.

And I hear the receptionist come in and say, Doc, it's your wife on the phone. Okay. I'll be back in a minute. And he walks away to get the phone. And he comes back and he says, I'm really sorry.

It was my wife and something about it. Because I said, Doc, look. In four weeks, you won't even remember who I am. In four weeks, I will be a passing thought. Somebody that you saw in the past and will never see again, I pray.

Right? But your wife and your children, that's for your life. Of course you take the phone call. You'll find that sometimes I take the phone call.

My mother used to call me on the Saturday night worship quite often. You know, and I would answer the phone. Hi, Mom. Everything okay? Yeah, just wanted to call and visit. Okay, well, say hello to the Saturday night congregation, Mom.

[41 : 23] You little, you know. But what if she was having some serious problem? She's living by herself. You see, we get so worried about the immediate, about what's going on right now in our lives that we can cause our own problems.

Too busy, concerned about so much. Martha, Martha, you're concerned about so much when only one thing really matters. Only one thing, Jesus said, really matters.

Don't worry about the things you'll forget in two days or two months or two years. Focus on the things that are going to last for your whole life and right on into eternity.

In verse 26, it says, Nevertheless, we must run aground on some island. Storms getting worse. Storms getting worse.

Storms getting worse. Storms getting worse. Storms getting worse. You know, it's a shame because we want a world where the storms won't affect us. Dear God, make my life perfect.

[42 : 31] Put me back in the Garden of Eden with no problems. And if you're a real God, I won't face a single storm for my whole life. Amen. We actually have people who believe that.

That if they pray to God and they're faithful to God, they'll never have a storm. They'll never have a problem. They'll never have a difficulty. They'll never face something that makes them feel like they're at the end of their lives and at the end of their wits.

But God doesn't promise us that he'll take away the storms. He said, I will never leave you nor forsake you. Love.

Love. The love that God wants us to feel and experience and the love that God wants us to share with others is a love that is faithful. Faithful no matter what. Faithful when we run into storms that are not our making, but even faithful when we make the wrong choices in life.

The book of Hosea is about when the people of Israel just turn their back on God. And there's a chapter in it where God says, I am so ticked off.

[43 : 39] I taught you how to walk. I took you like a little child and showed you life. I cared for you. I nurtured you. And this is the way you treat me. I'm just at a point where I want to throw you out.

And then God says this, and this is so incredible. He says, how can I give you up, Ephraim? How can I hand you over, Israel? How can I treat you like Adma?

How can I make you like Zoboam? My heart is changed within me and all my compassion is aroused. I will not carry out my fierce anger, nor will I devastate Ephraim again.

For I am God, not a man. The Holy One among you. I will not come against their cities. Tough love.

I hear that phrase. You know, sometimes we need to provide discipline. Sometimes we need to provide correction. Sometimes I think God may send some storms into our lives to kind of nudge us the way we're supposed to go.

[44 : 40] But real love is faithful even when it feels like that makes us foolish. Because God loves you.

God will love you until the last moment of your life. And he sent an angel. Surprised by love.

I read the newspaper yesterday. I meant to reread it this morning. So if I get this a little wrong and when you read it, then you can correct me. That's okay. Here's the point. Some lady who's never been to Buffalo, she said she came here and she was coming to visit her father.

She said my father was pretty much a bum. He left me when I was a little girl. He had five wives. There were four kids. And I was the only one who showed up while he was dying in a hospital in Buffalo at Mercy Hospital.

And she said, you know, I didn't figure I'd be there very long. I didn't even know this man really. But somehow when I got to Mercy Hospital, the people there, the nurses and the aides and the folks there, even the chaplain came around to be with me and made me feel like I was doing the right thing.

[45 : 51] She said one lady even just snuck in my room and left the newspaper and coffee for me. People were so loving and caring that I went back to the Hotel Lafayette and I registered for another night.

She said I visited with my dad and that night I just needed some kind of distraction. So I was on the streets of Buffalo and I asked somebody, do you know where the ballpark is? They said, oh sure, we know where the ballpark is.

We're going there. Come on with us. And she said, and we walked to the stadium and they bought my ticket. And they had me sit with them. And we had a wonderful evening where I forgot all the distractions and the problems of my life.

I went back to the Hotel Lafayette all bedraggled and looking like a worn out street person of some sort. And she said the weirdest thing was happening.

Every time I got another night at the Hotel Lafayette, she said they seemed to upgrade me to a nicer room. She said everybody in Buffalo that I met, the people on the streets, the people in the restaurants, everywhere I went they just wrapped their loving arms around me.

[46 : 59] It made such a difference for my life. She said the last night I went to the Hotel Lafayette and said I need another night. I'm sorry. I should be telling you this in advance. And they said that's okay. We have a room for you.

And she said she went up and opened the doors to a suite that looked like something out of the movies and she just cried. Because you see sometimes we can be that angel without even realizing it.

And I have to believe that if people on the streets of Buffalo, people at the Hotel Lafayette, people in Mercy Hospital can be that loving, then Christians can be that loving. Amen? And I know you'd say, well where do I find a stranger?

Where do I find somebody like that to do something for? You can look right around you. Jesus said, even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, that wasn't Jesus, that was David.

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for God is with me. Today we're going to list the names of people who have gone on to glory.

[48 : 02] It's hard. I don't know if you've ever faced the loss of a loved one in your life. I have, with a lot of you, done hundreds of funerals, but I've done it myself too.

And one of the questions families have is should we have calling hours? Should we have calling hours? And usually the answer is yes. But you know why people don't want to have calling hours? I'll tell you why.

Because here's what they're afraid of. They're afraid that they're going to go to this funeral home where they're not comfortable in the first place, where they're feeling awkward in every possible way, and sit there for hours while no one shows up.

No one shows up. Oh, I know it can be exhausting having all sorts of people show up, but that's not the fear. The fear is that you're standing there and no one comes in the room.

People say to me, well, I don't go to calling hours because I don't know what to say. You don't have to say anything. Just show up. That's all the people at that moment need is someone who'll reach out in the midst of their storm and love on them.

[49 : 09] Peter was walking on water. The winds and the waves of the storm started to make him frightened. And it says that he started to sink like Wile E. Coyote, right?

And Jesus reached out his hand and put him with his brothers and sisters and said, you need to believe.

Don't give up. God is still with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you. Trust in him. He'll walk you through the storms.

He might even teach you how to walk on water. He called me out upon the waters the great unknown the feet may fail.

And there I find you in the mystery in oceans deep my faith will stand and I will call upon your name and keep my eyes above the waves when oceans rise my soul will rest in your embrace your heart for I am yours and you are mine in your grace in your grace abounds in deepest waters your sovereign hand who'll be my guide where feet may fail and fear surrounds me you've never been and you won't start now and I will call upon your name and keep my eyes above the waves when oceans rise my soul will rest in your embrace but I am yours and you are mine spirit lead me where my trust is without borders let me walk upon the waters wherever you would call me take me take me deeper than my feet could ever wander and my faith would be made stronger in the presence of my Savior spirit lead me where my trust is with the waters let me walk upon the waters wherever you would call me take me deeper than my feet could ever wander and my faith would be made stronger in the presence of my Savior

[53 : 23] I will call upon your name and keep my eyes above the waves when oceans rise my soul will rest in your embrace for I am yours and you are mine that song seems to take me on a journey where it starts off like my heart sometimes like oh I don't know about any of this and yet at the end it's like yeah

I'm gonna trust you but how many times do we not walk in trust do we not walk in faith do we feel like the world's pressing in on us and we're not turning to God you know we're in a relationship with God and he's there for us to be able to reach out and hold us and carry us through and so we want to be in right relationship with God and we have an opportunity this day to come and confess and be again in right relationship won't you pray with me Lord I am a sinner Lord I am a sinner I need your grace I need your grace help me to trust you fill me with your love fill me with your love that I can be loving that I can be loving forgive me when I haven't been when I have sinned against you when I have sinned against you when I have sinned against others set me on the right path set me on the right path guide me to be your witness in Jesus' name we pray

Amen to hear the good news. Christ died for us while we were still sinners. This proves God's love for you and for me. So in the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Glory to God. Amen.

So now as we are right with God, let's be right with one another. As the body of Christ prepares for the table, won't you greet one another with the peace of the Holy Spirit? Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Be still, my soul, the Lord is on your side.

[57 : 15] Bear patiently the cross of grief or pain. Live 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.

Be still, my soul, your God will undertake. To guide the future as in ages past.

Your hope, your goodness, but nothing's shape. Oh, now mysterious shall be bright at last.

[58 : 36] Be still, my soul, the waves and winds still know. The Christ who rule them while he dwells below.

Be still, my soul, the waves hasting on. When we shall be forever with the Lord.

When disappointment, grief and fear are gone. Sorrow for God, love's purest joys restored.

In the Lord, it's true, my soul. When pain and tears are past. All safe and blessed.

All safe and blessed. We shall meet at last.

[59 : 53] As we gather at the table of the Lord. As we gather at the table of the Lord, we come to experience the living God. And that God himself invites you to come and join us. It doesn't matter whether you're a part of this. Good morning.

It doesn't matter if you're a part of this church or if you've been here for a couple weeks, a couple years or a couple moments. God himself is inviting you and calling you to come and join us at this table.

The Lord be with you. And also with you. Lift up your hearts. You lift them up to the Lord. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right and a good and joyful thing always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth. You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life.

When we turned away and our love failed, your love remained steadfast. You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God, and spoke through the prophets.

[60 : 53] And so with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn. Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Holy are you. Blessed is your son, Jesus Christ, who came and dwelt among us, a person of God with flesh on him. He raised the dead in Lazarus and will raise the dead in us in the time to come.

But on the night in which he was betrayed, he gathered with his disciples and took the bread. He gave thanks to God and he broke the bread and he gave it to his disciples and said, eat of this, all of you.

This is my body of the new covenant broken for you for the forgiveness of sin. Eat of this, remembering me. And so in remembrance of these mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice in union with Christ for offering for us as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

[62 : 28] Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again. Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here. And on these gifts of bread and wine, make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

Renew our communion with all your saints, especially with those whom we name before you. Mark Ash, Jr. William Becker, Sr.

David Berryman and Claire Boleslaw Jim Coles Beverly Cornelius Arthur Davoli and Michael Ducharre Bruce Ellman Bruce Ellman Don Fink Mark Gents and Sheila Garrick Janice Gominiak Jane Harrington Bob Herman and Sheila Garrick Mary Lipiano Miriam Hoffmeyer John Jones and Shirley Jones Alexander Mitrowski Ernie Pace Cassie Padsadowski and Jesse Palumbo Mary Platt Linda Rubens Harold Rubens and Dick Roseland Mary Stauffer Clifton Bud Thompson

Bob Wurttemberger and Annelie Radha Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses strengthen us to run with perseverance the race that is set before us looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith by your spirit make us one with Christ one with each other and one in ministry to all the world until Christ comes in final victory and we feast at your heavenly banquet through your son Jesus Christ with the Holy Spirit in your holy church all honor and glory is yours almighty Father now and forever Amen And now as confident children of God let's pray the prayer that he taught us in saying 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 like to invite those who are serving to come forward at this time please and his name to then leave...

[65 : 37] let's turn to the spirit in the Bible to apostle to all children the Lord why are we gonna die you again? But if our Lord broke and free of me But if our Lord broke and free of you But if our Lord broke and free of you Amen.

Now God invites you to the table of the Lord. You're welcome at the rail for prayers for healing and anointing to light a candle. Come and join us with the Lord.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

[70 : 08] There's someone that can't come forward for communion and would like communion brought to their seat. Would they please raise the hand right now? Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

I'd like to invite you all to stand if you're able.

Amen. Amen. Higher than the mountains that I've faced, stronger than the power of the brave, constant in the trial and the change, one thing remains.

[73 : 20] Your love never fails and never gives up and never runs out on me.

Your love. On and on and on and on it goes.

It overwhelms and satisfies my soul. Can I never, ever have to be afraid?

One thing remains. One thing remains.

Your love never fails and never gives up and never runs out on me.

[74 : 30] Your love. Death in life I'm confident and covered by love's heart of your great love.

My death is pain. There's nothing that can separate my heart from your great love. Your love.

Your love never fails and never gives up and never runs out on me. Your love. Your love never fails and never gives up and never runs out on me.

Your love never fails and never gives up and never runs out on me. Every home is down on me.

Higher than the mountains that I face. Stronger than the power of the grave.

[75 : 35] Constant in the trial and the change. One thing remains. This one thing remains.

He will never leave you nor forsake you. He will never leave you nor forsake you.

He will never leave you nor forsake you. Let that sink into your heart and into your bones and give you hope that in the midst of the greatest storms of life, you can know that he will never leave you nor forsake you he will be with you all the days of your life.

Go and share that confidence, that faith, that hope, that love with all the people in your lives and be the face of Jesus. Go in peace. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.