

**Perley Parish**  
**Time after Pentecost – Lectionary 24**  
**September 12<sup>th</sup> 2021**

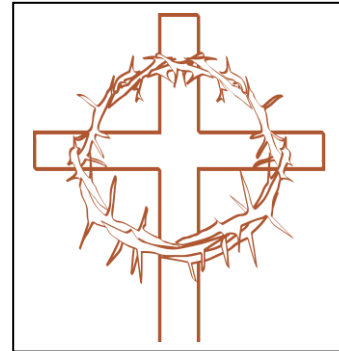
Gathering Hymn: Lift High the Cross #377

Refrain:

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim  
Till all the world adore his sacred name

Come Christian's follow where the Master trod,  
Our King victorious, Christ the Son of God. Refrain

O Lord, once lifted on the glorious tree  
Your death has bought us life eternally. Refrain



Welcome and Announcements

Rally Sunday is finally here!!!

Welcome back – whether you fell of the church wagon, enjoyed the online watching in your PJ's or just plain worked to stay safe and secluded – we are so glad that we are back.

RECOMMENDING – not requiring – masks

We've all had to adapt to live in and almost after and then back in the middle of pandemic – we too will continue to be flexible at church as well as everywhere else in our lives these days.

Lift up Emil's family after the passing of his brother Byron

9AM streaming will continue

Monday night Nora Council meeting

Reach out

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, +one God, whose teaching is life, whose presence is sure, and whose live is endless. Amen

Let us confess our sins to the one who welcomes us with an open heart.

God our comforter:

**Like lost sheep, we have gone astray. We gaze upon abundance and see scarcity. We turn our face away from injustice and oppression. We exploit the earth with our apathy and greed. Free us from our sin, gracious God. Listen when we call out to you for help. Lead us by your love to love our neighbors as ourselves. Amen**

All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. By the gift of grace in +Christ Jesus, God makes you righteous. Receive with glad hearts the forgiveness of all your sins. Amen.

Prayer of the Day

**O God, through suffering and rejection you bring forth our salvation, and by the glory of the cross you transform our lives. Grant that for the sake of the gospel we may turn from the lure of evil, take up our cross, and follow your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

Psalm 116: 1-9 (read responsively)

I love the LORD, because he has heard my voice and my supplications. **Because he inclined his ear to me, therefore I will call on him as long as I live.** The snares of death encompassed me; the pangs of Sheol laid hold on me; I suffered distress and anguish. **Then I called on the name of the LORD: "O LORD, I pray, save my life!"** Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; our God is merciful. **The LORD protects the simple; when I was brought low, he saved me.** Return, O my soul, to your rest, for the LORD has dealt bountifully with you. **For you have delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling.** I walk before the LORD in the land of the living.

Isaiah 50:4-9

The Lord GOD has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning he awakens— awakens my ear to listen as those who are taught. The Lord GOD has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backward. I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting. The Lord GOD helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame; he who vindicates me is near. Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together. Who are my adversaries? Let them confront me. It is the Lord GOD who helps me; who will declare me guilty? All of them will wear out like a garment; the moth will eat them up

Holy Gospel according to Mark 8:27-38 **Glory to you O Lord**

Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" And they answered him, "John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets." <sup>29</sup> He asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered him, "You are the Messiah." And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him.

Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." The Gospel of our Lord, **Praise to you, O Christ**

Back Pack Blessing

God gives all of us jobs; things to do that help us to serve God in the world. This is called our vocation. You have a vocation, and one of your vocations right now is to go to

school. You can serve God by going to school and learning about God's world, by being with other people, by being loving toward others. And you learn things you need to know for whatever you might want to be when you grow up. And you know what, you're not just learners. You are teachers; you kids have lots of stuff to teach us grown-ups about God. You can teach us about faith and love.

We need you in school, and we need you here with us at church. So now we want to say a special prayer for you, asking God's blessings as you start your job of being in school. Listen to this story from Matthew's book in the Bible, "Then little children were being brought to him in order that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples spoke sternly to those who brought them; but Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs."

God, bless this bag and the child who will use it. Let him/her not be scared, be with him/her as he/she learns and grows this year. Show him/her how to serve you and help him/her to teach us all about your love. In Jesus' name. Amen.

*Have all school workers stand:*

The school systems that teach children and help them to live out their vocation requires a body of people with different gifts. We bless you now as you begin your vocation of helping children. We ask your blessings God, on these women and men who serve you in so many different ways. We pray that you would give them patience, wisdom, and a sense of humor. Use them to show children your love and to guide children as they grow.

What about the rest of us? Well we all are called to support, encourage, and pray for the children who are members of the fellowship we all share with Christ Jesus. We are all called to be teachers and learners with children; we are to teach them about God's love, and also to learn from what children have to teach us.

Let us say a prayer and blessing for all of these together: **God, bless these bags and the children who use them. Be with them as they learn and grow this year. Show them how to serve you and help them to teach us all about your love. Bless those who serve our children as well and all of us who support and love them as they grow and learn about you and everything they will need to be whatever it is they decide to be when they grow up. In Jesus' name. Amen.**

Children's Message

Message

Grace and peace to you from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

After the last few weeks of Jesus' amazing miracles and blessings I was sure that I once again I would find a text that would fill my mind with an amazing and spirit-filled message. After all, we've heard about all the miracles Jesus has done for weeks now - feeding thousands with next to nothing, cleaning those with unclean spirits and disease, those who cannot walk and those that cannot hear and speak just last week. He's healed, he's raised some from the dead, he has helped Paul to realize that if he didn't let the fear take over and believed in Jesus - he could walk across the sea on top of the water. It was nothing less than a miracle to learn of the healing hands of Jesus despite the urging of his disciples to ignore and send away the Canaanite women and

her ailing daughter. What miracle or feat would I get to tell and share with you all in my message today?

Obviously, it was thrilling last week to learn that Jesus is the Savior, the Messiah and Son of God. Our Gospel ended last week with "He has done ALL things well!" But when we stop think about it - the realization of what that means and what the future holds for this Man, this Leader - can also leave us feeling a bit of sadness, of dread and even disbelief as Jesus, the man amongst them, stands before his followers and announces what is yet to come.

I can't wrap my head around what it must have been like for the disciples to sit back, to watch Jesus, and be a part of the excitement in all the amazing things he was doing. Stop to think what it was like to be standing there with people as far as the eye can see and know you have five loaves and two fish? I mean how many of us - minutes from your expected guests arriving - have had that moment of panic on whether you made a big enough turkey? Or think about the fear of having a child that is so very ill and knowing that you have no means of helping or curing them. And then this man, who looks just like most of the other men you know, comes and heals your child - while everyone is watching. Or being bedside as your brother takes his last breath only to have Jesus show up and just like that the dead becomes alive again. How could you not be drawn towards this miracle worker and not want to be with Him always?

Here they all are – gathered in the village and Jesus looks at them with the simple question "who do you say that I am?" our text says they answered him, "*John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.*" He's not like anyone else they know – they have heard of the old testament prophet Elijah, they have heard of John the Baptist and of course there are stories of others prophets out there being told. But he asks them again, "*But who do YOU say that I am?*" Peter answered him, "*You are the Messiah.*" And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him.

They really had no idea though on what was ahead - just what was coming Jesus's AND their way. Our text says "*Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly.*" Wait, a minute Peter's thinking.... Wait, so you have done all these amazing things, we have followed you and looked to you to lead us into a marvelous new kingdom here and this is how it's going to end??? Peter's astonishment with the whole idea of what Jesus saying had to be what all of us would've thought when He foretells the pain, torture, suffering, betrayal and of course the full plan of death. "Never Lord! This shall never happen to you!" Why would any of us believe that THIS man – the healer of so many would soon become the regions "most wanted" and the one who MUST die?

So what do they do? What would we do? As a believer sitting in His midst, would we question Him like Peter? Wonder how he could be telling the truth? Or do we sit there and realize that there is obviously something so amazingly special about Jesus? Yes, he's a man but he is not like any other and there is something in the fact that He knows what lies ahead and He is ok with it. I think one of the most favorite lines in the Bible for me – of course there are the loving and caring promises that top all things – but when Jesus looks at Peter and says "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things." I just see this image of Jesus putting out his hand like superman guarding him and all those around him from Satan – a doubting evil spirit – who would make Peter question the validity of what Jesus was telling them. Jesus is calling out the doubt and the doubters to let them

know that there is more to be done and it's not going to be pretty, easy or even totally understandable. if he's ok with it should we not be ok with it too? But wait, if we believe and remain His disciple, then what does that mean for us? What lies ahead for us?

Jesus gives us an idea when He says, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me." Deny themselves and take up the cross. DING DING DING – my red light goes off when I begin to understand that He has is asking us to trust in Him and in doing so we will need to give up our life – all that we have and know – and just to follow Him. Give up all EVERYTHING and just take that leap of faith. We all have times in our lives when we have found ourselves needing to make decisions that are tough or seem a little scary. I just did that last summer when I finished up Seminary, was ordained and faced the decision of whether I quit my job at M State for 32 years and leave this Parish to become a full-time pastor. Do I walk away from these two churches after just two years – when I really wanted to stick around a bit longer and see what we could do next and the stability and benefits of my College job. Oh and did I mention all of these decisions needed to be made in the middle of a world-wide pandemic? Scary decisions indeed and thankfully we – meaning Kirkebo, Nora and myself – came up with a wonderful solution for the next few years. One that I hope blesses all of us in being Church together.

Change is hard and I'm sure the disciples were not only hearing the bell ring on the "leave everything behind and follow me" speech too but now?! Not there is an unplanned (at least as far as they knew) departure of their leader and things were definitely going to be changing. I truly don't think any of us are so unwilling in our lives paths to not able to adjust, move over, or accommodate a bump in road. As one of my favorite show is known for "expect the unexpected". That's from Big Brother for those that haven't heard it before. But of course, sometimes "change" means we really need to look at things differently. Trust that our paths have been changed for a reason and know that we must be able to find the flexibility inside us to adjust accordingly. The disciples – and any of us – would've longed to keep the amazing ride going just the way it was. Continue on with things status quo. Can you imagine the fascination with Jesus and what he was doing and saying – the intensity of it all? Wouldn't it be much harder to walk away FROM him than to walk away WITH Him.

Finally we can't forget about the last part of Jesus' request – "take up their cross and follow". I believe that Jesus' choice of words in this request was very intentional. First, I would believe that it is of course a reference to the means in which Jesus would meet His death and His resurrection – that's a given to me. But likewise, I have to wonder if He didn't also want them to realize that taking up that cross – taking on a burden - was going to mean that they too would have to be obedient to the Father, be a servant to the cause and be willing to die for all of it. What a burden to carry. Crosses in those days were known as a sense of punishment and laborious work and suffering.

I've told you before about my oldest son and our conversation about my beginning seminary 6 years ago to become a pastor. His response to my announcement again was "Ok, but we already have enough crosses in our house". He's probably right, as I do believe there is at more than one in every room - I'm not quite sure of his correlation with being a pastor and having too many crosses lies, but that's the mind of a child with Aspergers and their literal understanding of things, I guess.

How many of us – you – have a cross in your home, have cross that you wear around your neck or on keychain, have a cross that stands on a shelf or a coffee table? We have all found and understood the importance of the cross and therefore feel the

sense of what it means to take up the cross for Jesus. Of course there is much more to being a Christian and giving your life to him than just putting a figure on display. You can fill your house with crosses and cover your chest with them but truthfully it's the cross that you received on your forehead at the time of your baptism, and the promises that you made when you confirmed your faith at confirmation that truly matters.

Honestly, it IS very reassuring to me to be reminded every time I see a cross - that someone loved me enough to give His life so I could be forgiven and be loved by my Lord and Savior. It's in knowing that by giving your heart and your soul and believing in His love and His plan that you can know that you will never be alone and that you too will be sitting with the Father when the time comes, the time that matters. He knows it won't always be easy for us, He knows there are times when we will struggle with what is asked of us, when our paths are changed and we wonder why, but He also has promised us that no matter what, He will come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then He will reward each of us according to what we have done.

Remember - "Whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it". I can't imagine a better reason to follow than that!

Please pray with me..... Heavenly Father, we are so very thankful that Jesus was willing to take up his cross and die for our sins. As his disciples, help us to take up our cross as well, forsaking all else, and follow Him. Until that day that we will see you and rejoice in your kingdom. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen!

**Hymn of the Day/Offering:** Will you Come and Follow Me? #798

Will you come and follow me if I but call your name?

Will you go where you don't know and never be the same?

Will you let my love be shown? Will you let my name be known,  
will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?

Will you love the "you" you hide if I but call your name?

Will you quell the fear inside and never be the same?

Will you use the faith you've found to reshape the world around,  
through my sight and touch and sound in you and you in me?

Lord your summons echoes true when you but call my name.

Let me turn and follow you and never be the same.

In Your company I'll go where Your love and footsteps show.

Thus I'll move and live and grow in you and you in me.

Celebration of Alana (Nora only)

It was important for this church to acknowledge and to have a moment to remember the loss of Alana during the very active time of the pandemic. We were unable to all gather as we would've wanted. To share a time to remember and to celebrate all that she was to not only all of us but to this church. Because of this it only seemed fitting to kick off our Fall Rally Sunday with a few minutes of intentional acknowledgement of Alana's contributions to our lives.

As we celebrate our time with Alana may we remember that nothing can separate us from the love of Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. And in faith we look to that day when death will be no more, mourning

and crying and pain will be no more. When we were baptized in Christ Jesus, we were baptized into his death. We were buried therefore with him by Baptism into death, so that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in new life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. I have no doubt that she is seated at the right hand of the Father and watching over us and Nora Lutheran Church each and every time we gather.

I loved my talks with Alana and her amazing guidance as I began not only my internship here but my call to this church. And while I could share some of those I know that you all have so many, many more memories and stories of how Alana touched your lives. I will therefore turn it over to Melissa to share a few words about our friend.

Reflection by Melissa

Prayer

Heavenly Father: **We thank you because You are the giver of life. Today we celebrate the life and the spirit of Alana. While we may mourn her death we rejoice in knowing that our place is in also in heaven, where she and all the saints who have gone before us will sit beside you. We bless you and remember Alana and the gift of life he was to us. We will continue to remember and reflect upon her and rejoice in knowing that he is rejoicing with you. Amen.**

Apostles Creed

*I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.*

*I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian/catholic Church, the communion of the saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. Amen*

Prayers of the people: (Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer**)

Made children and heirs of God's promise, we pray for the church, the world and all in need. Revealing God, you have made yourself known through bread and wine, water and word. Continue to nurture your church that it is a place where your presence is experienced and shared. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Creating God, you brought life into being and called it good. Bring new creation to lands devastated by tornados, hurricanes, floods, fires and other disasters – there are so many in our country and in this world right now. Restore our lands and rivers and help us to harvest our crops abundantly. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Forming God, you gather this community together. Shape our communal life that in our prayer, praise and worship we honor you and encourage one another. Increase our joy in working together and bless those beginning a new school year and those re-joining us in the pews after a time away. It is good to be together again. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

We especially lift up today Sam and Brian, Sonya and Roger, Daniel and Terry, Marlis and Kirk, Evonne and Whitney, Jaime, Anne and Brent, and all those we name silently now in our own hearts..... Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Receive these prayers, O God, and those in our hearts known only to you. Amen

#### Meal

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection and ascension, we await his coming in glory. **Pour out your Holy Spirit, that by this Holy Communion we may know the unity we share with all your people in the body of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.**

#### Words of Institution and Lord's Prayer

*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. 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*

#### Invitation Communion:

All who hunger and thirst, come. The table is ready.

#### After Communion Prayer:

Lord of life, in the gift of your body and blood you turn the crumbs of our faith into a feast of salvation. Send us forth into the world with shouts of joy, hearing witness to the abundance of your love in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen

#### Blessing:

People of God you are Christ's body, bringing new life to a suffering world. The holy Trinity, +one God, bless you now and forever. Amen

#### Sending Song: Great is thy Faithfulness #771 (blue)

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:

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

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

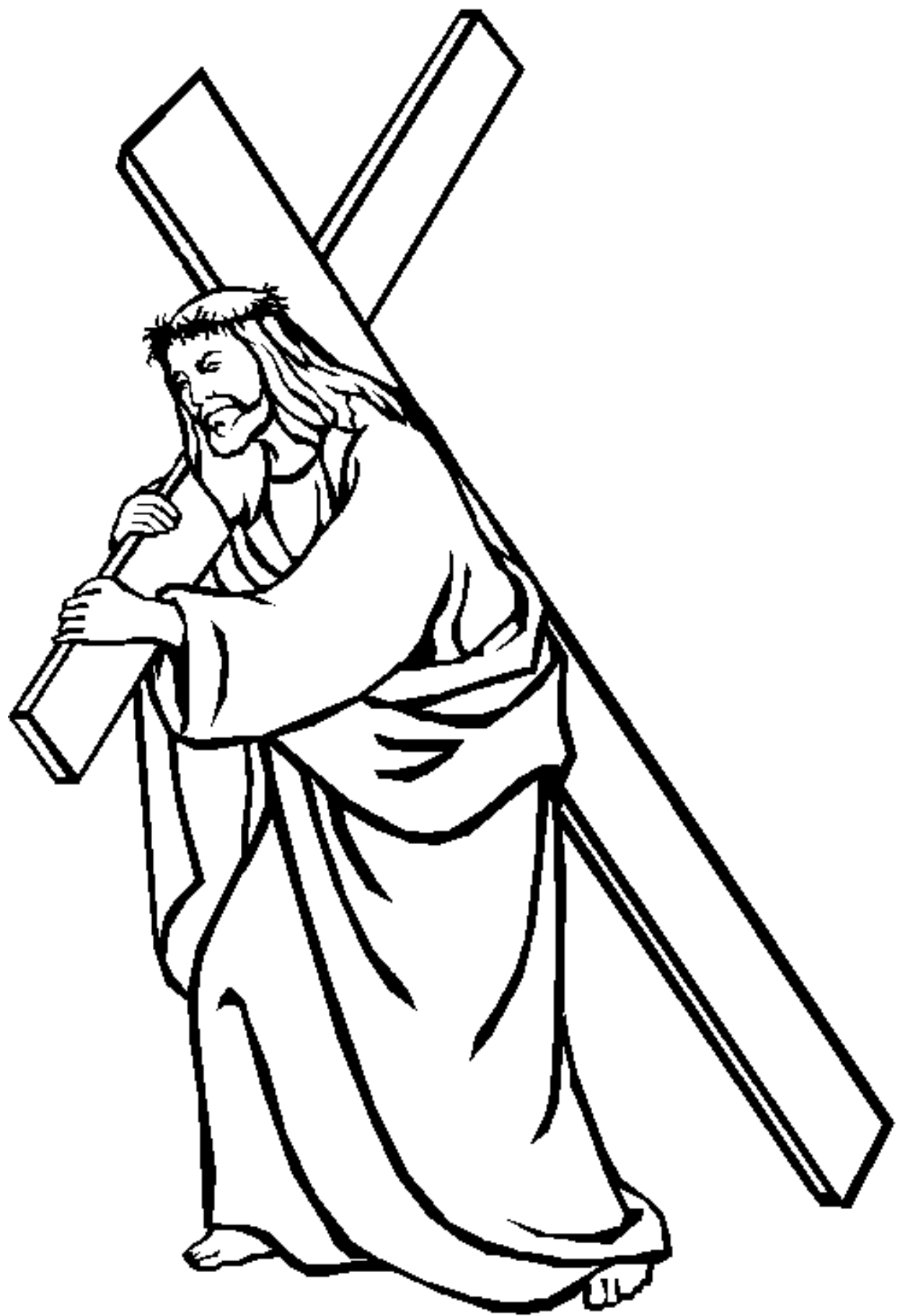
#### Dismissal

Go in peace. The living Word dwells in you. **Thanks be to God.**

#### Mark Your Calendars:

Monday, September 13<sup>th</sup> – 6:30 council meeting at Nora  
Sunday, September 19<sup>th</sup> – 9am at Kirkebo with Lutefisk Dinner at Nora

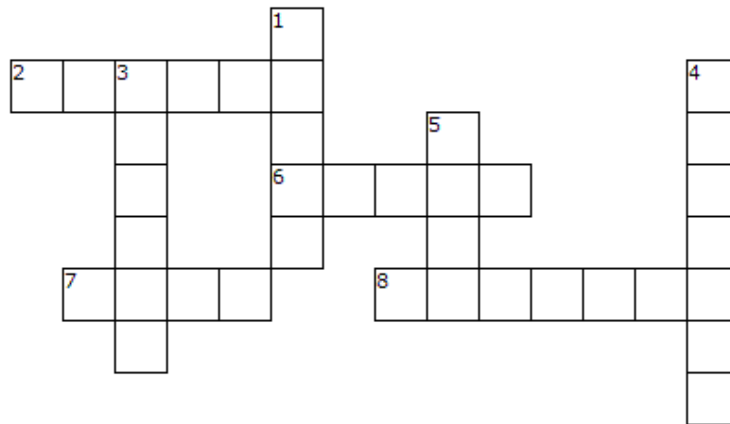




# Take Up Your Cross

"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." Mark 8:34b (NIV)

Based on Mark 8:27-38



## ACROSS

2. To experience injury, pain, or death
6. The evil enemy of God; the leader of the fallen angels
7. The spiritual part of a person which exists after death
8. The expected savior of the world

## DOWN

1. The object upon which Jesus was crucified
3. To take someone as our leader or model
4. A person who speaks for God
5. To keep something from harm or loss

SUFFER	SATAN	SOUL	CROSS
MESSIAH	PROPHET	FOLLOW	SAVE

# Take Up Your Cross

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Based on Mark 8:27-38



O C I G P R O P H E T S B R N  
F Y V I L L A G E S Y I F C Z  
A S L S O U L I D D G S G H V  
C R O S S D W L A B C U O R S  
A H R G T M R G J M L F R I J  
L A F E Q O B L O H L F I S X  
D O J O W F E H I S U E S T Q  
S I S A R R B U I F P R E U K  
D A S E F F R D S Q E E Z E I  
E S T C A O E Q A A I F L N L  
N F E A I K L I V A V Z S X L  
Y U W V N P S L T H V E Q G E  
C N M H I W L L O O O N V T D  
B Y G A I N D E I W T E A C H  
E H A A F E T A S D W O E Z P

WORLD	CHRIST	LIFE	TEACH	DISCIPLES
DENY	KILLED	SOUL	FOLLOW	SATAN
FORFEIT	VILLAGES	LOSE	GOSPEL	GAIN
PROPHETS	SUFFER	SAVE	RISE	CROSS