



*St. James Lutheran Church  
Fishersville, VA  
February 28, 2024*

## **Perseverance with Endurance**

### **Prelude**

### **Welcome**

### **Hymn: “Come, All You People” (WOV 717)**

*Assistant Minister will sing the first verse, the congregation will then stand and repeat the first verse and continue singing all verses.*

### **Greeting**

The love of God poured into our hearts,  
the saving grace of Jesus Christ,  
and the abundant life of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

### **Opening Prayer**

O God, ancient and eternal, in Christ you make all things new. In baptism we have been buried with Christ and made citizens with the saints. Keep us faithful all our days, and at length bring us into glory. Through the same Jesus Christ, our life, our strength, and our hope.

**Amen.**

*Be seated.*

**Perpetua and Felicity  
Harriet Tubman  
Sojourner Truth**

**Perpetua and Felicity** were early Christian martyrs (3<sup>rd</sup> century) who chose to die rather than forsake their faith in Jesus and their commitment to each other. Vibia Perpetua was a recently married, well-educated noblewoman, said to have been 22 years old at the time of her death, and mother of an infant son she was nursing. Felicity, a slave woman imprisoned with her and pregnant at the time, was martyred with her.

**Harriet Tubman** was an American abolitionist and social activist. After escaping slavery, Tubman made some 13 missions to rescue approximately 70 enslaved people, including her family and friends,<sup>[4]</sup> using the network of antislavery activists and safe houses known collectively as the Underground Railroad. During the American Civil War, she served as an armed scout and spy for the Union Army. In her later years, Tubman was an activist in the movement for women's suffrage.

**Sojourner Truth** was an American abolitionist and activist for African American civil rights, women's rights, and alcohol temperance. Truth was born into slavery in Swartekill, New York, but escaped with her infant daughter to freedom in 1826. After going to court to recover her son in 1828, she became the first black woman to win such a case against a white man.

### **Introduction**

Throughout history Christians have been called to lives of service and sacrifice. In our own lives of faith, we draw courage from the examples of the saints, and most of all we find strength from God, who is with us always.

**Hymn: “I Want Jesus to Walk with Me” (WOV 660 one verse)**



**From Sojourner Truth:**

“Children, who made your skin white? Was it not God? Who made mine black? Was it not the same God? Am I to blame, therefore, because my skin is black? . . . Does not God love colored children as well as white children? And did not the same Savior die to save the one as well as the other?” (“The Great Sin of Prejudice against Color,” 1863)

**Hymn: “I, The Lord of Sea & Sky” (WOV 752 one verse)**



**From Harriet Tubman:**

“Long ago when the Lord told me to go free my people I said, ‘No, Lord! I can’t go. Don’t ask me.’ But He came another time, and I said again, ‘Lord, go away. Get some better-educated person. Get a person with more culture than I have.’ But He came back a third time, and spoke to me as He did to Moses. He said, ‘Harriet, I want you.’ And I knew then I must do what He bid me do.” (James A. McGowan, *Harriet Tubman: A Biography* [Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2011], 38–39)

**Hymn: “Give Me Jesus” (WOV 777 one verse)**



**From Perpetua:**

“When my father in his affection for me was trying to turn me from my purpose by arguments and thus weaken my faith, I said to him, ‘Do you see this vessel—water pot or whatever it may be? Can it be called by any other name than what it is?’ ‘No,’ he replied. ‘So also I cannot call myself by any other name than what I am—a Christian.’”

**Readings**

**Isaiah 61:1-4**

<sup>1</sup>The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,  
because the LORD has anointed me;  
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,  
to bind up the brokenhearted,  
to proclaim liberty to the captives,  
and release to the prisoners;  
<sup>2</sup>to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,  
and the day of vengeance of our God;  
to comfort all who mourn;

<sup>3</sup>to provide for those who mourn in Zion —  
to give them a garland instead of ashes,  
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,  
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.  
They will be called oaks of righteousness,  
the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.  
<sup>4</sup>They shall build up the ancient ruins,  
they shall raise up the former devastations;  
they shall repair the ruined cities,  
the devastations of many generations.

## Hebrews 12:1-2, 12-13

<sup>1</sup>Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, <sup>2</sup>looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

<sup>12</sup>Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, <sup>13</sup>and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed.

## Homily: Rev. Gordon Putnam

*Stand as you are able.*

### Hymn: “So Great a Cloud of Witness” Words by Paul D. Weber, Tune “He Leadeth Me.”

1. So great a cloud of witnesses surrounds us as we run the race,  
That we may share Christ’s holiness and live in joy before God’s face.  
Sin clings so closely to our lives we lack the fortitude to run.  
Fling off the weight that slows our strides!  
We must endure as did God’s Son!
2. Consider him who knew our frame, who, for the joy before him set,  
Endured the cross, despised the shame, and reigns with God in glory yet.  
Then let us lift our drooping hands and strengthen now our weakened limbs!  
Do not lose courage! Understand:  
Those whom God loves, God disciplines.
3. To Sinai’s mount we have not come, to darkness, storm, nor blazing fire,  
But to God’s home, Jerusalem, and to the angelic, festal choir;  
To Jesus Christ, whose blood was shed, to all who claim his promise sure.  
Do not refuse the living Head!  
With holy awe, give thanks! Adore!
4. O righteous God, consuming Fire, refine our faith! Our wrongs redress!  
O Spirit, come! Our hearts inspire to strive for peace and holiness!  
O Christ, our Source and Goal alone, lead us, by grace, through per’lous days  
Until, at last, before your throne  
We give you honor, endless praise.

Thank you to Florence Jowers for playing the organ for us today. Her husband Paul Weber, wrote the hymn.
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## Prayers

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

### Hymn: “Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying” (WOV 775)

Let us pray.

Mighty God of mercy, we thank you for the resurrection dawn, bringing the glory of our risen Lord who makes every day new.

Especially we thank you—

**for the sustaining goodness of your creation . . .**

**for the new creation in Christ and all gifts of healing and forgiveness . . .**

**for the gifts of relationship with others . . .**

**for the communion of faith in your church . . .**

**Hymn: “Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying” (WOV 775)**

Merciful God of might, renew this weary world, heal the hurts of all your children, and bring about your peace for all in Christ Jesus, the living Lord.

Especially we pray—

**for those who govern nations of the world . . .**

**for the people in countries ravaged by strife or warfare . . .**

**for all who work for peace and international harmony . . .**

**for all who strive to save the earth from carelessness and destruction . . .**

**for the church of Jesus Christ in every land . . .**

**Hymn: “Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying” (WOV 775)**

O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**LORD’S PRAYER**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.**

Let us bless the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

Almighty God, the Father, ✠ the Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve us.

**Amen.**

**March 6<sup>th</sup> Zion, 6 pm Soup Supper, 7 pm Worship**

**Faithful in Prayer**

**Gregory the Great** was a sixth-century pope who is often remembered as one of the “fathers of Christian worship” because of his work revising the liturgy and making developments in church music.

**Patrick** was a missionary to Ireland. Called by God to carry the good news of Jesus to the Irish, he became one of the founders of the great Celtic tradition of Christianity.

**March 13<sup>th</sup> Grace, 6 pm Soup Supper, 7 pm worship**

**Striving for Justice**

**Archbishop Oscar Romero** was an outspoken critic of the government corruption, military abuse, and oppression of the people of his native El Salvador and was martyred while celebrating mass in 1980.

**Joseph** took Mary and Jesus to Egypt becoming refugees at the hands of a tyrant ruler.

**March 20<sup>th</sup> Bethlehem, 6 pm Soup Supper, 7 pm Worship**

**Dying and Rising with Christ**

**Hans Nielsen Hauge**, a nineteenth-century Norwegian lay preacher who initiated a religious revival in his home country, Norway.

**John Donne** was a seventeenth-century English poet and dean of St. Paul’s Cathedral in London.