



66B PENTECOST 25B - BEAUFORT LITURGY

Hidden promise

Abstract

“Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child. Children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. 13 Everyone will hate you because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved.

Mark 13:12-13

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OLD TESTAMENT

1 Samuel 1:4–20

⁴ Whenever the day came for Elkanah to sacrifice, he would give portions of the meat to his wife Peninnah and to all her sons and daughters. ⁵ But to Hannah he gave a double portion because he loved her, and the LORD had closed her womb. ⁶ Because the LORD had closed Hannah's womb, her rival kept provoking her in order to irritate her. ⁷ This went on year after year. Whenever Hannah went up to the house of the LORD, her rival provoked her till she wept and would not eat. ⁸ Her husband Elkanah would say to her, "Hannah, why are you weeping? Why don't you eat? Why are you downhearted? Don't I mean more to you than ten sons?"

⁹ Once when they had finished eating and drinking in Shiloh, Hannah stood up. Now Eli the priest was sitting on his chair by the doorpost of the LORD's house. ¹⁰ In her deep anguish Hannah prayed to the LORD, weeping bitterly. ¹¹ And she made a vow, saying, "LORD Almighty, if you will only look on your servant's misery and remember me, and not forget your servant but give her a son, then I will give him to the LORD for all the days of his life, and no razor will ever be used on his head."

¹² As she kept on praying to the LORD, Eli observed her mouth. ¹³ Hannah was praying in her heart, and her lips were moving but her voice was not heard. Eli thought she was drunk ¹⁴ and said to her, "How long are you going to stay drunk? Put away your wine."

¹⁵ "Not so, my lord," Hannah replied, "I am a woman who is deeply troubled. I have not been drinking wine or beer; I was pouring out my soul to the LORD. ¹⁶ Do not take your servant for a wicked woman; I have been praying here out of my great anguish and grief."

¹⁷ Eli answered, "Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant you what you have asked of him."

¹⁸ She said, "May your servant find favor in your eyes." Then she went her way and ate something, and her face was no longer downcast.

¹⁹ Early the next morning they arose and worshiped before the LORD and then went back to their home at Ramah. Elkanah made love to his wife Hannah, and the LORD remembered her. ²⁰ So in the course of time Hannah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, ^j saying, "Because I asked the LORD for him." ⁱ

GOSPEL

Mark 13:1–8

The Destruction of the Temple and Signs of the End Times

13:1–37pp—Mt 24:1–51; Lk 21:5–36

13 As Jesus was leaving the temple, one of his disciples said to him, “Look, Teacher! What massive stones! What magnificent buildings!”

² “Do you see all these great buildings?” replied Jesus. “Not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down.”

³ As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John and Andrew asked him privately, ⁴ “Tell us, when will these things happen? And what will be the sign that they are all about to be fulfilled?”

⁵ Jesus said to them: “Watch out that no one deceives you. ⁶ Many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am he,’ and will deceive many. ⁷ When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. ⁸ Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places, and famines. These are the beginning of birth pains.”ⁱⁱ

66B Pentecost 25B - Beaufort Liturgy

Hidden promise

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2021 | PENTECOST 25B | PROPER 28 | YEAR B

Old Testament & Psalm, Option I

Old Testament 1 Samuel 1:4–20

Psalm 1 Samuel 2:1–10

or

Old Testament & Psalm, Option II

Old Testament Daniel 12:1–3

Psalm Psalm 16

New Testament Hebrews 10:11–14 (15–18) 19–25

Gospel Mark 13:1–8ⁱⁱⁱ

In response to a disciple's admiration of the Temple, Jesus predicts its complete destruction. He warns his followers against the attractions of leaders who make empty promises. Rather than be overwhelmed by what must take place, we're told not to be alarmed – just as joy comes following the pain of childbirth, these earthly pains hold the promise of God's kingdom to come.

Sometimes it's hard to find a path through troubling times, and we often flounder in the face of real difficulty. It can be helpful to be reminded that what we are going through almost certainly has been experienced before, and there is much wisdom from those who have gone before us that can sustain us until the light appears once more.

This week we explore finding a path through difficult times.

	Pre-Service
	Introit TIS #653 – “This is a day of new beginnings” V1,3
	Greeting May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ The Love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all and also with you
	Introduction Our lives are dictated to by night and day. At this time of the year days are getting longer and the nights shorter. Without the benefit of modern lighting, we can perhaps imagine why those in past generations always hoped that light would soon follow the dark.

	<p>On the other hand, the coming of light doesn't make a lot of sense unless you first have the darkness.</p> <p>We sometimes use similar language to speak about good and not so good experiences.</p> <p>As we gradually experience the relief as pandemic restrictions ease we begin to go back to church plan holidays we feel free-er and less anxious</p> <p>As bad as 2 years of pandemic madness has been Would we feel as elated today, if not for what we have been through.</p> <p>In today's worship, we will explore how we might find that path through difficult times, from darkness to light.</p>
	<p>We Gather</p> <p>Call to worship Through the abundance of your steadfast love, we will enter your house, O Lord. Here, we will bow down to you.</p> <p>Lead us Lord, in your righteousness and make your way straight and clear for us.</p> <p>Acknowledgements God created the lands we stand on. The Wadawurrung people were it's first inhabitants since time before remembering. You may well identify with another indigenous group.</p> <p>We pay our respects to their elders and communities That continue to care for this land and it's peoples.</p> <p>We also pay our respects to those Second and Third generations peoples that have been part of our lives that similarly care.</p> <p>A gathering prayer God of the country lanes, speeding highways and streets, of twisting paths, straight streets and hidden alleyways, of the small gate and narrow path, we ask for provision for our journey, and to see you walking beside us, protecting us, encouraging us, loving us.</p> <p>We pray this in the name of Jesus, who moves us.</p> <p>Amen.</p>
	Hymn/song

	TIS #161 – “Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord”
	<p>Welcome</p> <p>On June 10, 1838, the infamous Myall Creek Massacre took place where 28 Aboriginal men, women and children were massacred and their bodies burned.</p> <p>The ensuing court case marked the first time in Australian history that white men were tried for crimes against Aborigines. Seven men were hanged as a result.</p> <p>Our lands are dotted with similar memorials groups of Aboriginal and non-aboriginal people working together in acts of reconciliation.</p> <p>Remembering the past helps us live today And maybe even stops history repeating itself. We’ve all experienced happy and difficult times in our lives. I think, remembering times that have impacted our lives Make us who we are.</p> <p>A prayer of approach Surrounded by memories, near and far, we come before you, O Lord, our God. In the middle of turmoil, you offer us peace. In the middle of conflict, you offer us resolution.</p> <p>We come before you now to worship. We know that our future is in your hands, and that your promises are true. Amen.</p>
	<p>Readings Mark 13:1–8 - Video</p> <p><i>respond</i> For the word of the Lord</p> <p>Thanks be to God</p>
	<p>Video Great are you Lord</p>
	<p>We say Sorry</p> <p>Creator of all that is good, we bring our sorrows, our anguish and distress for the ways we have failed to show your love, be it by word, by deed, or by inaction.</p> <p>So many have given so much of their lives for us and yet we have failed not only them but you. Lord God, forgive us we pray.</p>

	<p>Amen.</p> <p>Assurance of forgiveness God is beyond our rivalries and disagreements, beyond our cruelty and neglect and God speaks his words to those who truly repent.</p> <p>The lord says to us My child, I hear your pain, I feel your sorrow, I take your burden; go, go free from pain, unburdened by sorrow for all that is past, I forgive you, go in peace, go in love, go in joy. Amen.</p>
	<p>Hymn/Song AHB #531 – “When we walk with he Lord (Trust and obey) “</p>

Address

The Good News about the Future
Mark 13:1-31

A student tells of working at a Uni radio station.

These were the days before computers and CDs.

They were a small operation, so the deejays also read the news
which came in on teletype machines which would clattered away constantly.

These machines had bells attached
which would go off when a particularly important story came in.

Posted above the teletype machine
was a list of what the various number of rings of the bells meant.
Normal headlines one or two rings
severe storm or tornado three or four rings
major accident or disaster five or six rings
national emergency seven or eight rings
a grave national or global threat nine or ten rings
Under the last entry someone had written fifteen rings,
“[Melbourne wins the premiership].^{iv}”

Today’s scripture lesson would require 15 ringing.

This week was Remembrance Day
and on this a day which profoundly affects many who lived through those times
I offer this story.

A Christian army medic who had served in both Iraq and Afghanistan
volunteered to serve on the Covid-19 ward in his local hospital.

He found it as challenging a place to be as any of the field hospitals he had served in.
His daily prayer was that he would be able to
be a bearer of the light of Christ in the middle of gross trauma.

Today’s readings, together with Remembrance Sunday stories,
offer plenty of scope for reflection on being,
and encouraging one another to be, bearers of hope in difficult circumstances,
thereby helping others to find pathways through dark times.

Mark 13 is one of those chapters in the Bible

that would scare you to death if you were to dwell on it.

Chapter 13 of Mark is about the end of the world.

Earthquakes, giant buildings falling down, wars and rumours of wars and eventually,

“the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light;

the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.”

It's a scene to which even Hollywood with all its special effects could not do justice.

It's scary.

The apocalyptic language of Mark 13 about the end of the world

is not the sort of thing you want to read right before falling off to sleep.

It's that scary.

But life is scary, isn't it?

I don't want to ruin your day,

but even if you and I are not here when history comes to an end

there is much in life to fear.

We've just lived through the worst of a pandemic.

Every day people die in tragic accidents, or homicides.

Every day, someone gets a diagnosis of a fatal disease.

We don't have to think about the end of time to get ourselves into an anxious state.

There are enough possible personal tragedies to keep us all anxious.

And so when I would rather preach on many other subjects in the bible

we need to deal with Mark 13.

We need to confront the fact of dramatic upheavals that will come,

whether it is the end of the world, or whatever may come our way.

None of us knows the future.

That's the first thing we need to see.

As the popular saying goes, “If you want to give God a laugh, show Him your diary.”

It's only prudent that we make plans and that we keep to schedules,

but no one really knows what tomorrow will bring.

That's why David, Kathy, your office holders, and elders

pray constantly for your safety and health.

I think it's telling that in this 13th chapter of Mark

our Master says that **even he** doesn't know

when God will bring down the final curtain on his human experiment.

Of course, there are enough self-anointed prophets

setting dates from time to time for the end of the world.

The world will end someday.

The Bible teaches us that at that time Christ will set up his kingdom.

there will come a time when God comes for us personally.

Maybe we should just leave such things to God.

So, God is still in charge.

There is much in life that is beyond our control,
but nothing is beyond God's control.
God loves us intimately, so why not leave things in God's hands and relax?

Bishop Desmond Tutu,
once spoke of his own struggle with life and with God.
He recalled his favourite cartoon of God standing next to an open filing cabinet.
Open files are strewn around that filing cabinet and God,
in obvious despair, has His hand on His head.
The caption has God saying, "[O no,] I seemed to have lost my copy of the divine plan."^v

Well, God hasn't lost His copy of the divine plan,
and God's plan is still in effect.
God is in charge of how and when time will end.
And God is in charge of our lives.
God will provide for our needs, regardless of what may come.

Robert Louis Stevenson once put it like this:
The stars shine over the mountains,
the stars shine over the sea,
The stars look up to the Mighty God,
the stars look down on me;

The stars shall last for a million years,
a million years and a day,
But God and I will live and love
when the stars have passed away.

The scout motto, but also the Christian's motto for confronting the future is,
"Be prepared."

One of the tasks of life that many of us take quite seriously is to be prepared.
We watch our savings and our pension funds.
We want to have the funds we need for our old age.
And we take care to make sure we are part of a good health plan, just in case.
And that we have enough insurance for our family.
And we try to take care of ourselves physically and mentally and emotionally.
We want to be strong to be able to meet any unexpected challenges.

The only place we are apt to short-change ourselves is spiritually,
and this is just the place Mark 13 focuses.
Are you prepared to meet God?
Will you be able to give a good accounting of your life when that time comes?

Yes, we are saved by grace, not works.
That doesn't lessen our need to grow spiritually.

Have you learned to trust God for the living of your life?
 Are you prepared? Regardless of when it will be,
 one day (sooner or later) we will meet our Creator.

And so that's why we can't neglect Mark 13,
 with all its scary elements.
 We need to ask ourselves whether we are ready.
 We need to take an accounting of our lives.

No one knows the future,
 but we know the One who holds the future, and He loves us personally.
 Are we prepared for whatever may come our way?
 Are we prepared to meet God?
 Amen

	Hymn/song TIS #613 – “Lord of all hopefulness”
	Offering OFFERTORY SENTENCE What a privilege to be called to share in God's vision of a world of justice and peace. OFFERTORY PRAYER God, challenge us to give more than lip service to your vision of justice and peace: help us to take these resources, and everything else we have to give, and use them to fashion what is needed for a fairer, more compassionate world. Amen.
	Notices
	Prayers for all people When darkness casts its shadows keep us firm in the hope of light to come. Show us the pathway that leads to life, for you are our God Defend us, O Lord. As we remember the people who gave their lives for the freedom of others and their sacrifices on behalf of future generations, may we live by their example of duty and courage. Show us the pathway that leads to life, for you are our God Defend us, O Lord. As we face the wounds of history,

reflecting together on the pain caused by colonization, war and conflict and the scars of mistrust and aggression.

Show us the pathway that leads to life,
for you are our God
Defend us, O Lord.

We remember all who long for freedom and peace, remembering today:
Nazanin Zaghari Ratcliffe unjustly detained in Iran;
families terrified by domestic violence;
migrants risking everything in search of a better life,
especially those in desperate circumstances at the Poland-Belarus border
and we ask for a swift and just solution to this crisis.

Show us the pathway that leads to life,
for you are our God
Defend us, O Lord.

As the world heads for catastrophic temperature increases
and people shut their ears to the truth
we pray for life-changing courage to act.

Show us the pathway that leads to life,
for you are our God
Defend us, O Lord.

We stand together with countries on the frontline of global heating
remembering today the peoples of the Pacific Islands
who are afraid of being swallowed by the rising sea.

Show us the pathway that leads to life,
for you are our God
Defend us, O Lord.

We pray for areas of conflict, remembering Myanmar, Sudan and Nigeria.
We pray for peace in all the pain of our broken and troubled world
and for faithful peace-building.

Show us the pathway that leads to life,
for you are our God
Defend us, O Lord.

When trust in politics and politicians has been shaken by sleaze and scandal
and leaders do not serve the people,
keep us mindful of your servant kingship.

Show us the pathway that leads to life,
for you are our God
Defend us, O Lord.

	<p>When many voices compete for our attention; when we are tempted by easy answers to complex problems and we are afraid of the cost of following you:</p> <p>Show us the pathway that leads to life, for you are our God Defend us, O Lord.</p> <p>We remember today: All those affected by the pandemic Those that are ill and the people that care for them Frontline workers Those that are not vaccinated for whatever reason For whom the isolation continues</p> <p>When we watch the suffering of those we love and long for their healing and release send your Spirit's presence to comfort all who are in pain.</p> <p>Show us the pathway that leads to life, for you are our God Defend us, O Lord.</p> <p>As we travel in the company of the saints and with the memory of all whose faith has inspired our own we give thanks that we do not travel alone.</p> <p>Show us the pathway that leads to life, for you are our God Defend us, O Lord. Amen</p>
	Lord's Prayer
	Hymn/song TIS #134 – "Praise, my soul, the king of heaven"
	We are sent out Lord God, source of all love, from whom every soul has come, and to whom every soul will return, help us to hold close the stories of those who have gone before us, and to take comfort from their wisdom. Let their stories tint our daily life with colour, and give us hope and light to our path. Amen. <p>May the Lord bless us and keep us May His face shine upon us and be gracious to us</p>

	May he lift up His countenance upon us and give us peace
	Benediction TIS # 779 "May the Feet"
	Thank you

ⁱ [*The New International Version*](#). (2011). (1 Sa 1:4–20). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

ⁱⁱ [*The New International Version*](#). (2011). (Mk 13:1–20). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

ⁱⁱⁱ [*Revised Common Lectionary*](#). (2009). Bellingham, WA: Faithlife.

^{iv} <http://www.holyspirit-elca.org/SERMONS/2002/021302.html>

^v Michael W Hopkins, <http://www.twosaints.org/Sermons/2006-08-06.htm>.