

the promised Messiah. Then He gave them the connection between that Scripture and Himself. It is interesting that while Jeremiah complained about the rejection of the people, Jesus seems to have expected it. He had a ready and honest answer to their rejection of the Gospel and of Him. God is not sidetracked from His work of bringing salvation to the world. He is not sidetracked by our sin or our rejection. He continues to call the saved from every tribe and every nation to join us in the gift of faith He established in His Son.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

© Almighty God, fountain of all mercies, well-spring of all comfort, You are more ready to hear than we are to pray, You are more ready to save than we are to repent. We lift our hearts to You. We give You our humble and heartfelt thanks for all Your gifts and graces.

Make us mindful of Your desire to save all people in Jesus. Show us the fields ready for the harvest. Open our eyes to the vast multitudes who await the sound of the Gospel. Then open our hearts to an enlarged sense of our responsibility to share the glorious Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to pray for laborers for the harvest.

When we are ready, O God, enlighten our minds, that we may know Your will and walk in Your paths. Lead us in all truth, and instill in us charity toward all mankind. Grant us a larger faith in Your mighty power, a deeper trust in Your merciful providence, and a more perfect love of Your Son. Help us see in Him Your image, the revelation of Your grace, the reflection of Your glory, the incarnation of Your Word, the manifestation of Your presence, and the evidence of Your care for all the children of world, whatever age we are.

Comfort those who are afflicted among us, that they may in love perceive Your good and gracious will and find release from all their trials. Preserve and maintain for us, and for all mankind, good government, integrity, honest citizenship, and dignity. Put down all who are self-seeking opportunists, purge out all who intend revolution and strife, and suppress those who seek power through the weakness of others.

Hear us as we bring to You our private petitions. (Time of silent prayer.) Keep us and all Your people in the unity of the faith and in oneness with Christ through His church. We ask all these things in His name and for the sake of Jesus, our Lord and Savior.

© Amen.

EPIPHANY FOUR

Chant Tone



Introit

Arise, O Lord; O God, lift up Your hand;\*  
Forget not the af — flicted.  
  
The Lord is king forever and — ever;\*  
The nations perish from His land.  
O Lord, You hear the desire of the  
af — flicted;\*  
You will strengthen their heart; You  
will in cline Your ear

To do justice to the fatherless and the  
oppressed,\*  
So that man who is of the Earth may  
strike terror — no more.  
  
Glory be to the Father and to the Son\*  
and to the Holy — Spirit;  
as it was in the be — ginning,\*  
is now, and will be forever. — Amen.  
  
Arise, O Lord; O God, lift up your hand;\*  
Forget not the af — flicted.

(Antiphon, Psalm 10:12;  
Psalm 10:15-18)

Collect of the Day

Almighty God, You know we live in the midst of so many dangers that in our frailty we cannot stand upright. Grant strength and protection to support us in all dangers and carry us through all temptations; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever.

Gradual

Praise the Lord, all — nations!\*  
Extol Him, all — peoples!  
For great is His Love toward us,\*  
and the faithfulness of the Lord endures for — ever.  
Ascribe to the Lord the glory due His name;\*  
bring an offering and come in to His courts!

(Psalm 117:1-2a; 96:8)

**ENTRANCE PRAYER:** We thank You, our heavenly Father, for the care You have extended to us during the night. We praise You for permitting us to see the light of another day. Glorious are all Your works and marvelous are all Your Words. For putting Your Word in the mouth of Your prophets, we praise and glorify You. For raising up a Prophet like Yourself from our midst, even our own Lord Jesus Christ, we adore Your most holy name. For the full revelation of Your will in Your Word made flesh, we praise You. Continue us in Your Word through the work of Your Holy Spirit and grant us grace to always be Your people. Amen (So be it, Lord.)

**A FEW YEARS AGO, THE MILITARY SERVICES WERE SHORT ON CHAPLAINS.** In mailings to Pastors they included a "Ziggy" cartoon. Ziggy is shown walking past a recruiting office. A sign in the window says, "Pastor, join the Army. No fund raising and authority guaranteed by the Constitution." Except for the military where stripes, bars and birds establish rank, authority is a difficult thing to obtain. In business those making the decisions, those with authority over others, often have no capability to do the work. Jesus has authority because He is God. He has the authority over life and death, eternal life with Him in Heaven. Your boss is unlikely to do your work, then give you credit for it to his superiors. Jesus not only has the authority to decide who are His, He even came to work for us doing the job of Salvation that we could not do, and then had His work credited to us.

**THEME OF THE DAY:**

Authority and Power

**INTROIT**—(Antiphon: Psalm 10:12;) Psalm 10:16-18

In our chosen verses from Psalm 10, David prayed that God would come into the world and vindicate Himself against the wickedness and dishonor the people had been displaying against God. Which is interesting because, when God did in fact come among His people (our Gospel Lesson,) He was reviled and dishonored by the people.

**COLLECT**

Suffering is the only thing that is common to people in the world. Christians know that suffering comes as a result of sin. We ask that God would not only give us the strength to avoid temptations but that God would in fact carry us through anything that is dangerous to our salvation.

**OLD TESTAMENT LESSON**—Jeremiah 1:4-19

As a prophet of God at a time when many did not want to hear God's Word, Jeremiah had a difficult time. At times it was so discouraging that Jeremiah cursed the day he was born and espoused grave doubts that anything good could come out of the message. Our lesson is from the time of Jeremiah's call to be a prophet to the nations even those beyond Israel. God assures Jeremiah that He was Loved. God explained that He knew Jeremiah in the womb. God saves. God calls the saved to be His. God sends them to the Gospel. God equips them with the desire and power to spread His promise of salvation. The Word of God will destroy and overthrow sin, and build up and plant righteousness.

**GRADUAL**—Psalm 117:1-2a, 96:8

Psalm 117 is a general song of praise. Psalm 96 was sung as the Ark was moved into Jerusalem.

**EPISTLE LESSON**—1 Corinthians 12:31b–13:13

1 Corinthians 13 is known as the "Love" chapter in the Bible. Paul isn't speaking of wedded or friendship love, but a continuation of the discussion of Spiritual gifts. God's Love is what gives the Spiritual gifts their power. Paul described love, positively and negatively. These attributes point to God's nature and His Love for us in Christ Jesus. God is Love and nothing can separate us from God's Love in Jesus Christ. Paul was responding to problems the Corinthian congregation was experiencing in regard to gifts of the Spirit. The remedy for division is God's Love lavished on us in the work and the person of Jesus Christ our Savior.

**GOSPEL LESSON**—Luke 4:31-44

Jesus, the native Son, returned to His Synagogue. He read a well-known section of the prophet Isaiah, verses that described the special task of