

MINISTRY BY MAIL
Lutheran Conference of Confessional Fellowship
www.lutheranlccf.org
Sunday After Ascension, May 17, 2026

✠ ✠ ✠

(Hymns found in The Lutheran Hymnal, CPH, 1941)

Hymns: 611:1-5, 594:1, 605, 604, 609.

Lessons: Isaiah 55:1-11, 2 Peter 3:1-18, John 4:4-14.

Sermon Text: Revelation 22:12–17 and 20.

Sermon by Pastor Robert Mehltritt

In the name of Jesus Christ, Dear Fellow Redeemed,

The book of Revelation begins with the words ***“Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.”*** (Revelation 1:3, NIV84) It closes with the words ***“He who testifies to these things says, ‘Yes, I am coming soon.’ Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.”*** (Revelation 22:20, NIV84)

May we take to heart the message of Scripture as

WE CONSIDER THE FACT THAT JESUS IS COMING SOON

- 1. He has the power to do all these things:**
- 2. He will take those who believe to heaven and**
- 3. The unbelievers will be condemned to hell.**

Jesus tells us ***“Behold, I am coming soon!”*** These words are always like a double-edged sword, warning the unrepentant and comforting the faithful. Here we find these words primarily to comfort those who find it hard to hold on to their faith in a wicked world. Jesus will return in victory and fulfill all the wonderful promises of glory for his suffering church.

In last Sunday’s sermon you heard that we may not see results of our witnessing and confessing our faith in Jesus Christ to others. But today you are assured, in Jesus’ own words from the book of Revelation, that there will be a blessed end to our labors on earth.

In last Thursday’s sermon you heard again of the ascension of Jesus Christ into heaven, to sit in glory at God’s right hand until he judges all men. After that day of judgement will be a forever of blessedness for all who believe in him.

He has left earth and promises to come quickly. But it has been 2000 years and he hasn’t come? The Apostle Peter assures us: ***“But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day.”*** (2 Peter 3:8, NIV84)

On earth the wicked will still be wicked. The filthy will still be filthy. There has been warning enough given to the unbelievers, to all the enemies of Christ, to all the wicked and filthy. If they persist in their course, then their sins will finally lead them into eternal damnation. The more they harden their hearts, the smaller will be their chances of salvation, and their final end will be a matter of weeping and gnashing of teeth – and a whole lot worse! But those who are righteous and holy because of their acceptance of the righteousness of Christ will still practice righteousness and shall rejoice in holiness because of the power of God. It is the Lord who will strengthen them and bring them to the goal, to the salvation of their souls.

Jesus tells us about his reward, a reward of grace. He will reward the fruits of faith for believers, and the fruits of unbelief for ***“the dogs, those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.”***

Do we get to heaven because of the good things we have done? Certainly not! Many have confused grace and works but the Bible is clear on the matter of salvation. God does command that we believe in Christ to be

saved. In his first epistle, John wrote: ***“this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ.”*** (1 John 3:23, NIV)

Our sin is forgiven; we are declared righteous and heaven becomes our home because we believe he has saved us. Our own filthy rags of self-righteousness will not earn heaven for us, but it is the righteousness of Jesus Christ by which we gain heaven. Scripture says ***“God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”*** (2 Corinthians 5:21, NIV) Believers are made the ***‘righteousness of God’*** because all of Christ’s righteousness is given to the believer’s account. The child of God stands clothed in Christ’s righteousness. Those who enter Heaven do so by merit of Christ’s righteousness alone. His sacrificial blood made the payment in full for the sins of the world.

Jesus can do this because he is the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, and that picture would be clear to the first readers of this book of prophecy. In other words, he is everything! He is the author and finisher of our faith. He is the first and the last, and everything in between.

He is, as Zechariah prophesied, ***“the rising sun [who came] to us from heaven to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace.”*** (Luke 1:78–79, NIV84) He is the one of whom the Old Testament prophets have spoken.

The Apostle John, who wrote the Book of Revelation, made it known in the first verse of this book that Jesus sent his angel to tell John and us the things written in this book. Jesus says ***“I am the Root and the Offspring of David.”*** He is the Root, the creator as well as the descendant of David. He is the bright morning Star to bring the dawn and sunrise. He is both David’s Lord and David’s Son, the Day-spring from on high.

The invitation is ***“Come!” And let him who hears say, ‘Come!’ Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.”***

In the Bible thirst is sometimes used symbolically depicting spiritual poverty. Just as a man who is physically thirsty looks for something to drink, so the man who is spiritually thirsty needs God. ***“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.”*** (Matthew 5:6, NIV84) Jesus is the answer to man’s spiritual thirst. He said ***“If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.”*** (John 7:37–38, NIV84) Jesus said to the Samaritan woman, ***“whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”*** (John 4:14, NIV84) Jesus’ love, like an eternal spring of water, never runs dry

The person who hungers and thirsts for the righteousness of the Lord as revealed in his Word is freely invited to partake, to drink, to eat, to devour it in full measure, without money and without price. What the Spirit says in so many passages of Scriptures, what the church has preached for so many centuries, that message should be repeated by everyone who hears the gracious invitation to share forever in the joys of eternal salvation.

We are in the last hour of this world, and the return of the Lord for judgment may be expected at any moment. He is the just and righteous Judge, who can and will reward every one according to the works that he or she has done in this life, because such works are evidence of faith or unbelief. He is the almighty, eternal God, who has the world and all that is in it in the palm of his hand. He is a source of unfailing comfort to the believers, but a source of terror to all those who have rejected his salvation.

Blessed are those who wash their garments and their entire lives in the blood of the Savior. Because of the work of the Savior, they have a right to the tree of life. They can enter the heavenly Jerusalem. Those who will never enter heaven are the unbelievers, the impenitent, the wicked, the filthy, the murderers, the adulterers and the idolaters, and every one who practices and loves falsehood. For the unbelievers the day of judgement will just be the beginning of an eternity, a forever of torment.

It is the glorious privilege of the believers to wash their sin-stained garments, in fact, their whole lives, in the blood of the Lamb, and in this way to appear before the throne of God in the pure white garments of the righteousness of Christ. They are the ones who have a right to eat of the fruit of the tree of life. They are the ones whom God invites to enter the gates of the heavenly Jerusalem. There they will receive eternal joy; and pain and suffering and sadness will be a thing of the past.

At the end of this book John again quotes the voice of the Lord. Revelation closes with yet another promise of our Lord's return. ***"He who testifies to these things says, 'Yes, I am coming soon.' Amen. Come, Lord Jesus."*** This fact must never be forgotten by Christians. The coming of the Lord may be expected at any time.

And with this in mind, we accept and welcome the apostolic blessing with which John closes his book: ***"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all."*** A person who has forgiveness of sins also has life and salvation. That is our comfort throughout this life, until we open our eyes in eternity to see and enjoy what we here on earth hoped and believed.

On this Sunday between the Ascension and Pentecost, the day of the special coming of the Holy Spirit, we also remember Jesus' promise. ***"I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor [that is, the Holy Spirit] will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment: in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me; in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned."*** (John 16:7–11, NIV84)

One of the chief ministries, the chief works, of the Holy Spirit is to convict mankind of sin. Where the Holy Spirit is not at work to convict a person of sin no souls will be saved. When the Holy Spirit is present and working there will be conviction of sin. When a sinner repents it is the result of the Holy Spirit's work. The Bible declares that ***"no one can say, 'Jesus is Lord,' except by the Holy Spirit."*** (1 Corinthians 12:3, NIV84)

The Holy Spirit reaches out to the sinner, condemns his sin, and converts his soul. The whole process of conversion begins with and is carried out by the Holy Spirit.

Next week, on Pentecost Sunday, we will see again the special coming of the Holy Spirit.

Because Jesus tells us, ***"Yes, I am coming soon"***, even now, as we labor for him, he is preparing a place for us and has plans to return for us. When that day comes, we will be like him. Our glorified bodies will be like Christ's resurrected body.

At the end of the book, the end of the Bible, Jesus promises ***"Behold, I am coming soon!"***

John concludes with this prayer ***"Amen. Come, Lord Jesus."*** John was ready for Christ's return. May we be, too!

For the Christian who is living for God, nothing is more precious than the hope of Christ's return. No wonder the Bible teaches us to pray, ***"Thy kingdom come."*** (Matthew 6:10 KJV) This great truth must be the prayer from the heart of every Christian.

And we, all believers, answer the Lord in joyful cry: Amen, come, Lord Jesus! Yea, yea, so shall it be! May it be so! Amen!