



Lift High the Cross

Devotion

[Please ask attendees to bring a cross that is special to them. Please provide: musical accompaniment, hymnals, two readers, and two copies of this devotion for the readers. Words to “Lutheran Women One and All” are on the last page.]

Sing “Lift High the Cross” (LSB 837, LW 311). Hold up crosses while singing the refrain.

Reader 1: When Adam and Eve were tempted by Satan and ate of the forbidden fruit, we all became sinners.

Reader 2: Romans 5:12: *Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to men because all sinned ...*

Reader 1: Even before God sent them out of the garden, He spoke of His defeat of Satan, and therefore sin and death.

Reader 2: Genesis 3:15: *“I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”*

Reader 1: At the time it was not clear how that would happen, but the prophets foretold Jesus’ birth, suffering, and promise of salvation.

Reader 2: Isaiah 9:6,7a: *For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end ...*

Isaiah 53:5: *But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed.*

Habakkuk 3:18: *... yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation.*

Reader 1: Jesus told His disciples what kind of death was necessary for our salvation.

Reader 2: John 12:31, 32: *“Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.”*

Reader 1: Believers in Christ are saved through His death on the cross.

Reader 2: Galatians 2:20: *[We] have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer [we] who live, but Christ who lives in [us]. And the life [we] now live in the flesh [we] live by faith in the Son of God, who loved [us] and gave himself for [us].*

Reader 1: Now we view the cross as a sign of victory and we take up the cross. To mark us as His, we are born again through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. We receive the sign of the holy cross both upon our foreheads and upon our hearts to mark us as ones redeemed by Christ the crucified.

Reader 2: 1 Corinthians 15:56, 57: *The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Titus 3: 4-7: *But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*

Matthew 16:24: *Then Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.”*

Reader 1: This victory over sin and death is for all who believe.

Reader 2: 1 Timothy 2:3b, 4: *...God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*

Reader 1: God calls us to use our gifts and abilities to share the message of the cross with all people.

Reader 2: Luke 10:2: *“The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”*

Activity: With a partner share why your cross is special to you and how a cross can be used for witnessing.

Close by singing “*Lutheran Women One and All*” (following page).

Scripture references are from the ESV.

Lutheran Women, One and All

1. Lutheran Women, one and all
We have heard the Gospel call
We by faith have seen the Lord
Crucified and then restored.
We have seen Him pay the price
For our sins a sacrifice
Him we Lord and Christ acclaim
And unite to praise His name.
2. Lutheran Women young and old
Well we know His challenge bold
Help to take the Gospel Light
To a world in darkest night
By example in the home
By inviting those who roam
By our prayers for sinners lost
By our gifts for missions' cost.
3. Lutheran Women coast to coast
In the Lord a mighty host
Let us all united be
In the Holy Trinity
One in faith in hope and love
Working for the Lord above
Till our earthly labor's done
We in heaven shall all be one.

Tune: LSB 892, LW 495
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