

Christ is Here for You!

Isaiah 50:4-9

Sermon

My dear young brothers and sisters in Christ! Welcome to the 10-year anniversary of the celebration that is your continuing confirmation!

10 Years from now we will continue yet another celebration of your continuing confirmation as, you enter into calls to serve God after vocational, university, college, and even possibly seminary education.

That's right, you are the future of the church and while it may not be necessarily here in Eustis, you will be used by God to take over the positions that need to be filled and continue the mission of the church in this world.

Some of you *will* be Lutheran School Teachers, some of you will become youth ministers as Directors of Christian Education, others will be evangelists as Directors of Christian Outreach, and some Engineers, Doctors, tradesmen, business professionals, and the like.

All of you in your respective God given vocations will serve the churches that need your spiritual gifts and talents granted to you by God!

Today, we learn from Isaiah that our Father God prophesied through Isaiah Jesus' arrival with a tongue of those of who taught and today we confirm that Jesus is, and will continue, dwelling in you!

I have high expectations for you all: Because; your parents, your teachers, Mr. Yurk, Mr. Neas, and Principal Leech have given you the knowledge that will guide you in all your ways and order your step in the path God has laid out for you.

That means I cannot wait to begin that work with you, by my side, when God is ready to launch you to fight the evil forces of this world with weapons of The Spirit that cannot be resisted by even The Devil Himself.

And these weapons that will serve you the rest of your life are the Word of God, the Sacraments to forgive you and strengthen your faith, and the Body of Believers, the church, who will come alongside to worship with you, and support you, in difficult days that may lay ahead. And finally, there is prayer, when you can talk to the ultimate personified power; who created redeemed and sanctified the universe, just like talking to your best friend.

Now, at this point in your message, let me be clear. Not every church you will encounter will be the amazing place Faith has been for you.

Not every school you encounter will have teachers that love you the same way these teachers do. Not every church will have a Mr. Neas and Mr. Yurk who takes time away from their family for you.

No church is perfect and honestly, neither is Faith. We are a gathering of God's people who need forgiveness too, and that means we are all sinners just like you.

So, if you encounter that school or church that has stubborn ones, or if your future friends in Christ struggle with jealousy, gossip, power struggles, and rivalry. Know that God has sent you there with the biblical knowledge you have to recognize the sin when you see it, and forgive it when they need it. Making sure you minister to them with love above all.

I know what you might be thinking right now, "Man pastor, thanks for the doom and gloom sermon!" And I know it feels that way. But the truth is; there is no doom and gloom in your future, rather only a light shining in this dark world that will illuminate your paths and show you the truth, and that light is Christ who we are confirming today is in you!

As soon as your graduation from Faith Lutheran School commenced you will immediately be challenged for at least the next four years.

I have seen so many challenged and I want you to remember the gifts Christ won for you on the cross so you don't fall into the same pitfalls I have watched so many fall into; that have sat there just like you are today!

The first pitfall you may be faced with is false doctrine. Unfortunately, some Christians will lead you way from the Cross of Christ with false understandings of Communion and Baptism.

Be ready for the spitting condescending way they will dismiss biblical teaching and try to marginalize you because they cannot argue with you from Scripture.

Francis Pieper said, "Every Christian denomination has an interpretation of communion, Lutherans have the Word of God."

So be careful to keep this Word of God in front of you for devotion, guidance, discerning right and wrong, because it is the only thing in our culture for the last 2,000 years that has not changed or failed us in any way.

Then, shamefully, some will deny your baptism; turning it into *your*' works righteousness rather than God gracious gift, and insisting you must be baptized again as a sign of your commitment to God.

Never forget, your baptism, which we confirm today too, is not your commitment to Christ, your baptism is Christ's undeniable and eternal commitment to you!

You have been baptized which means you are God's child, and Christ lives in you, and He is with you no matter what. On that day your sins were washed away, and you were signed and sealed in the community of Christ. That certificate, that legally testifies to that fact, should sit in a place where you see it every day, so when you have a particularly bad day, you can look up at it and say, "I am baptized, my sins are washed away, and I am saved!"

Those powerful Words of the Gospel of Mark and the Letter from Peter who said under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, "Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved." And "Baptism now saves you!"

(Mark 16:16a, 1 Peter 3:21)

Don't ever let anyone deny what God undeniably did in your baptism, now and forever.

Unfortunately, it's not just the foolish false doctrine Christians you will be faced with. It is also the World.

For the World will tempt you away from church to presumably better things. Oh, and they are shiny, and they are new and fancy and everybody, at least online, seems to want it and do it too!

Never forget why the fisherman uses the shiny and fancy lures when they fish. It's not to save the fish, it's to catch them, and filet them, and ultimately eat them!

So Satan and the world will attempt to lure you away from the church with the latest and the greatest thing that they want you to have as long as you leave the security of Christ and His Word.

Instead of going to church, they want to entice you to go to the beach. Instead of going to the National Youth Gathering they will entice you to go to their destination vacations. In stead of going to servant events, mission trips, and weekend retreats, they will entice you to parties, sporting events, get togethers for silly selfie opportunities that do nothing to save your soul.

Stay in Christ and close to His gifts as we get you ready for Concordia Schools that will properly prepare you for life!

And finally never forget, that because Christ first loved us we will always love you, our true brothers and sisters in Christ.

When you meet that special boy or girl and you're ready to get married right here, this will be your spiritual home that welcomes you and marries you.

When you have children that need to be baptized, just like you were in that font right there, we will baptize them too.

I know, I know, I'm totally getting a little ahead of myself, *at least* as far as you're concerned, but I have been at these almost 23 years now, and I have baptized the children of the kids we confirmed in this very church and school just like you. So, the day is coming, and we will be here for you.

No matter how far you get, no matter what you do, no matter how far a field you wander from God, at Faith right here in Eustis Christ will always be here for you!

AMEN

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