

A Celebration of Life

Christopher Austin Thomas



August 12, 1985 – May 9, 2021

May 22, 2021
Calvary Lutheran Church
Richland Hills, TX

P Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the source of all mercy and the God of all consolation, who comforts us in all our sorrows so that we can comfort others in their sorrows with the consolation we ourselves have received from God.

C **Thanks be to God.**

P When we were baptized in Christ Jesus, we were baptized into his death. We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live a new life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound



1 A - maz - ing grace!— how sweet the sound— that
2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and
3 Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares I
4 The Lord has prom - ised good to me; his
5 When we've been there ten thou - sand years, bright



saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but
grace my fears re - lieved; how pre - cious did that
have al - read - y come; 'tis grace has brought me
word my hope se - cures; he will my shield and
shin - ing as the sun, we've no less days to



now am found; was blind, but now I see.
grace ap - pear the hour I first be - lieved!
safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.
por - tion be as long as life en - dures.
sing God's praise than when we'd first be - gun.

Text: John Newton, 1725–1807, alt., sts. 1–4; anonymous, st. 5
Music: NEW BRITAIN, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C **And also with you.**

Prayer of the Day

P O God of grace and glory, we remember before you today our brother Chris. We thank you for giving him to us to know and to love as a companion in our pilgrimage on earth. In your boundless compassion, console all who mourn. Give us faith to see that death has been swallowed up in the victory of our Lord Jesus Christ, so that we may live in confidence and hope until, by your call, we are gathered to our heavenly home in the company of all your saints, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C **Amen.**

The 23rd Psalm – spoken in unison

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:

he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul:

he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness

for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

I will fear no evil:

for thou art with me;

thy rod and thy staff

they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me

in the presence of mine enemies:

thou anointest my head with oil;

my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me

all the days of my life:

and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Remembrances of Chris

Cassandra Russell - Aunt
Robert Shields – Cousin

Because He Lives

1. God sent his Son, they called him Je - sus;
 2. How sweet to hold a new-born ba - by;
 3. And then one day I'll cross the riv - er;

he came to love, heal, and for - give;
 and feel the pride and joy he gives,
 I'll fight life's fi - nal war with pain;

he lived and died to buy my par - don,
 but great - er still the calm as - sur - ance
 and then as death gives way to vic - t'ry

an emp - ty grave is there to prove my Sav - ior lives.
 this child can face un - cer - tain days be - cause he lives.
 I'll see the lights of glo - ry and I'll know he lives.

Be - cause he lives I can face to - mor - row; be - cause he lives

all fear is gone; be - cause I know he holds the fu - ture,

and life is worth the liv - ing just be - cause he lives.

Romans 5

³And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

Romans 8

³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Homily

The Reverend Phillip Heinze

Just As I Am, without One Plea



1 Just as I am, with - out one plea, but that thy blood was
2 Just as I am, though tossed a - bout with man - y_a con - flict,
3 Just as I am, thou wilt re - ceive, wilt wel - come, par - don,
4 Just as I am; thy love un - known has bro - ken ev - 'ry



shed for me, and that thou bidd'st me come to thee,
man - y_a doubt, fight - ings and fears with - in, with - out,
cleanse, re - lieve; be - cause thy prom - ise I be - lieve,
bar - rier down; now to be thine, yea, thine a - lone,



O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Text: Charlotte Elliott, 1789–1871

Music: WOODWORTH, William B. Bradbury, 1816–1868

The Creed

P We confess the faith of the church throughout the ages, the faith Christ lived and the faith in which he died.

C **I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

The Prayers

- P** Almighty God, in holy baptism you have knit your chosen people together into one communion of saints in the body of Christ. Give to your whole church in heaven and on earth your light and your peace. God of mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**
- P** Grant that all who have been baptized into Christ's death and resurrection may die to sin and rise to share the new life in Christ. God of mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**
- P** Give courage and faith to all who mourn, and a sure and certain hope in your loving care, that, casting all their sorrow on you, they may have strength for the days ahead. God of mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**
- P** Grant to us who are still in our pilgrimage, and who walk as yet by faith, that, where this world groans in grief and pain, your Holy Spirit may lead us to bear witness to your light and life. God of mercy,
- C** **hear our prayer.**
- P** God of all grace, we give you thanks because by his death our Savior Jesus Christ destroyed the power of death and by his resurrection, he opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. Make us certain that because he lives, we shall live also, and that neither death nor life, nor things present nor things to come, will be able to separate us from your love in Christ Jesus our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** **Amen.**
-
- P** The Lord be with you.
- C** **And also with you**
- P** Lift up your hearts
- C** **We lift them to the Lord**
- P** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God
- C** **It is right to give our thanks and praise**

Words of Institution

The Lord's Prayer

P Remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

C Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

Distribution of Holy Communion

The Post Communion Blessing

P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His grace.

C Amen.

The Commendation

P Into your hands, O merciful Savior, we commend your servant, Chris. Acknowledge, we humbly beseech you, a sheep of your own fold, a lamb of your own flock, a sinner of your own redeeming. Receive him into the arms of your mercy, into the blessed rest of everlasting peace, and into the glorious company of the saints in light.

C Into paradise may the angels lead you. At your coming may the martyrs receive you and bring you into the holy city Jerusalem. May a choir of angels welcome you, and, where Lazarus is poor no more, may you have everlasting rest.

God Be with You Till We Meet Again



- 1 God be with you till we meet a - gain; by good coun-sels guide, up - hold you,
- 2 God be with you till we meet a - gain; ho - ly wings se - cure - ly hide you,
- 3 God be with you till we meet a - gain; when life's per - ils thick con-found you,



with a shep-herd's care en - fold you;
dai - ly man - na still pro - vide you; God be with you till we meet a - gain.
put un-fail - ing arms a - round you;

Refrain



Till we meet, till we meet, till we meet at Je - sus' feet;



till we meet, till we meet, God be with you till we meet a - gain.

Text: Jeremiah E. Rankin, 1828–1904

Music: GOD BE WITH YOU, William G. Tomer, 1833–1896



The Reverend Phillip Heinze
The Reverend Kyle Rouze
Debbie Villavicencio, organ/piano



Jesus Calling – Sent by Chris to his mother, Debbie on May 26

In a world of unrelenting changes, I am the One who never changes. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. Find in me the stability for which you have yearned.

I created a beautifully ordered world: one that reflected my perfection. Now, however, the world is under the bondage of sin and evil. Every person on the planet faces gaping jaws of uncertainty. The only antidote to this poisonous threat is drawing closer to Me. In My Presence you can face uncertainty with perfect peace.

"I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have [perfect] peace. In the world you have tribulation *and* distress *and* suffering, but be courageous [be confident, be undaunted, be filled with joy]; I have overcome the world." [My conquest is accomplished, My victory abiding.] John 16:33 Amplified Bible