

The Reality of Christ

This program was used for the Castine Church of the Brethren Sunrise Service on April 12, 2009 by the Sr. High Youth. The purpose of this service was to present a few of the prophecies and their fulfillment as related to Jesus' death and resurrection. The hope is that the reality of Jesus as the Christ, the Messiah, will be known through the sharing of the fulfillment of just a few of the prophecies related to Him. We'll let the rest of the script speak for itself.

This presentation can be made with 12-17 people, and gives a lot of flexibility regarding the simplicity or complexity of the drama and props.

Suggested Roles:

Opening/Introduction/Closing
Prophecy Reader
Fulfillment Reader
Narrator
The person of Jesus
The person of Pontius Pilate
The person of Judas
5-10 towns people

Suggested Props:

A cross (made from a tree trunk with a cross beam)
A tomb scene with a round stone that can be rolled away

Suggested songs/accompaniment to use during the presentation

Amazing Grace
By His Wounds – Mac Powell and various artists
I Will Rise – Chris Tomlin
Jesus Messiah – Chris Tomlin

Opening:

We thank God that you have joined us in this celebration of the resurrection of our savior Jesus Christ. This day is unlike any celebration or remembrance by any other religion. For those that have chosen to be followers and disciples of the One and Only Son of God, this day is a celebration of the fulfillment of all our hopes this side of heaven and beyond in eternity with Him.

Opening: Opening Prayer

Student Worship Team

Congregational Singing – Amazing Grace (original version)

Introduction:

Why is this day so important? The apostle Paul answered this for us in 1 Corinthians 15. He wrote, "But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. ... if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins." Our hope in eternal life is a result of God raising Christ from the dead. Without His resurrection, death has won, and there can be no belief that any of us will ever experience the promise of eternal life with Him.

A part of our confidence in His resurrection comes from the fulfillment of prophecies concerning Jesus as Messiah. Another comes from the eyewitness accounts of His appearing after His resurrection. If you are unsure of the reality of His resurrection, listen closely to the truths we share with you this morning, truths we believe with all our heart.

Introduction: Prayer

(Pray for the Holy Spirit to confirm the truths that are shared in the hearts of everyone there at the service. Pray against anything that would bring confusion, or disbelief. Pray for God to give wisdom and understanding as He promised through the Holy Spirit, that our ears would be opened, and our hearts fertile soil to receive the planting and watering of His truth, to the glory of God.)

Opening/Introduction:

There are conservatively over 100 prophecies and additional references regarding the Messiah in scripture with all but those related to the Messiah's second coming fulfilled in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The fulfillment of the prophecies are proof of the truth of the prophecy, and of the One, Jesus, of whom the prophecies were spoken. This morning, we will share with you just a few of the prophecies and their fulfillment in the death and resurrection of Jesus.

The Messiah would be rejected by His people.

Prophecy Reader: Prophecy: (Isaiah 53:3)

"He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not."

Fulfillment Reader: Fulfillment: (John 1:11)

"He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him."

Narrator:

Isaiah wrote that the Messiah would come, and would be rejected even by those who were His own – His family, community, those of His faith. He was rejected

by the religious leaders because He challenged their self-centered, legalistic teaching that was really no faith at all. He accepted those rejected by society, those who were outcasts, and healed them. He was the Creator of all, yet rejected by those He created to be in relationship with.

Drama: Jesus attempting to talk with people, but the people just turn away from Him.

Jesus betrayed by a friend.

Prophecy Reader: Prophecy: (Psalm 41:9)

"Even my close friend, whom I trusted, he who shared my bread, has lifted up his heel against me."

Fulfillment Reader: Fulfillment: (Matthew 26:20-25)

"When evening came, Jesus was reclining at the table with the Twelve. And while they were eating, he said, "I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me."

"They were very sad and began to say to him one after the other, "Surely not I, Lord?"

"Jesus replied, "The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born."

"Then Judas, the one who would betray him, said, "Surely not I, Rabbi?" Jesus answered, "Yes, it is you."

Narrator:

King David wrote this passage from Psalm 41 as a part of a prayer asking for mercy in his last days. He tells us about a betrayal at the hand of a close friend with whom he had shared bread. This was a foreshadowing of something that happened about 1000 years later with Jesus. As explained in Matthew 26:47-50, Jesus was betrayed by Judas, one of the 12 apostles, shortly after he had dipped his bread in the same bowl with Jesus at the Passover meal.

Drama: Jesus and Judas sitting behind a table, sharing the bowl and bread

Jesus betrayed for 30 pieces of silver.

Prophecy Reader: Prophecy: (Zechariah 11:12-13)

"I told them, "If you think it best, give me my pay; but if not, keep it." So they paid me thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said to me, "Throw it to the potter" –the handsome price at which they priced me! So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the house of the Lord to the potter."

Fulfillment Reader: Fulfillment: (Matthew 27:5-7)

“So Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away and hanged himself. The chief priests picked up the coins and said, “It is against the law to put this into the treasury, since it is blood money.” So they decided to use the money to buy the potter’s field as a burial place for foreigners.”

Narrator:

In Zechariah, the prophet speaks of a payment involving 30 pieces of silver and a good shepherd whose service is brought to an end. Matthew tells us in chapter 26 verse 15 that Judas was paid 30 silver coins for his betrayal of Jesus, the price of a slave. Judas told the Romans when and where they could arrest Jesus without being surrounded by a large crowd of Jesus' followers. In this passage from Matthew, about 520 years after the prophecy by Zechariah, Judas tossed the money into the Temple and the money was used to buy a potter's field as a burial place for strangers.

Drama: Judas throws silver coins off the stage, into the aisle

Jesus was beaten and spat upon.

Prophecy Reader: Prophecy: (Isaiah 50:6)

“I offered my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard; I did not hide my face from mocking and spitting.”

Fulfillment Reader: Fulfillment: (Matthew 26:67)

“Then they spit in his face and struck him with their fists. Others slapped him and said, “Prophecy to us, Christ. Who hit you?”

Narrator:

Isaiah writes about a servant of God who endures abuse at the hands of sinful people. This servant offers his back to those who beat him, his face to those who rip out his beard, and himself to those who mock and taunt him. Seven hundred years after Isaiah’s writing, Jesus was beaten, mocked, spit upon, had His beard pulled from His face, and taunted before his crucifixion.

Drama: Local town people taunt Jesus, mock Him, slap Him, etc.

Jesus was silent before accusers.

Prophecy Reader: Prophecy: (Isaiah 53:7)

“He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.”

Fulfillment Reader: Fulfillment: (Matthew 27:12-14)

“When he was accused by the chief priests and the elders, he gave no answer. Then Pilate asked him, “Don't you hear the testimony they are bringing against you?” But Jesus made no reply, not even to a single charge—to the great amazement of the governor.”

Narrator:

In Isaiah, the prophet wrote about a servant of God, a prophecy fulfilled in Jesus' life as He was placed on trial. He said that the servant would be afflicted and accused, and that he would remain silent like a lamb being led to slaughter. As explained in Matthew, which was recorded about 700 years after the time of Isaiah, this is what happened to Jesus. He was falsely accused but remained silent and did not protest the accusations.

Drama: Pontius Pilate leads Jesus standing still and silent before the people. The crowd gestures as though accusing Jesus.

He was pierced.

Isaiah 53:5

“By His Wounds” – Mac Powell and various artists
Sung by Students

Jesus on the cross.

Prophecy Reader: Prophecy: (Psalm 22:14-18)

“I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart has turned to wax; it has melted away within me.”

“My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; you lay me in the dust of death. Dogs have surrounded me; a band of evil men has encircled me, they have pierced my hands and my feet.”

“I can count all my bones; people stare and gloat over me. They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing.”

Narrator:

In this passage written by King David a thousand years before Jesus, are many prophecies that were fulfilled in Jesus' crucifixion. As scripture tells us, Jesus was stripped of all clothing, placed on the cross, His arms and feet bound to the crossbeam and post. Nails were driven through His hands and feet to hold Him there. The full weight of His body was suspended by the nails. There the Savior of all of mankind would hang, naked and bleeding, suffocating because He would eventually lose any strength to lift His body with His legs to breath. His bones, as a result of the stretching and the way His body was suspended, would have been pulled out of joint. Those witnessing the crucifixion that day could literally count His bones.

Fulfillment Reader: Fulfillment: (John 19:23-24, 19:28)

“When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took His clothes, dividing them into four shares, one for each of them, with the undergarment remaining. This garment was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. “Let’s not tear it,” they said to one another. “Let’s decide by lot who will get it.”

“Later, knowing that all was now completed, and so that the Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, “I am thirsty.”

Narrator:

Just before He died, Jesus was heard from the cross to cry out to God in the midst of His pain, “Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?” which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” Jesus was experiencing the separation from God the Father as a result of His bearing the sins of the world. But there was more. In the Jewish culture, if a teacher or rabbi wanted their students to remember a passage, they recite the first line of the passage.

Almost beyond comprehension, Jesus in His crying out to God is also teaching all who were gathered at the cross. His cry was the first line of Psalm 22, a passage that moves from apparent defeat and separation from God to the proclamation of victory and the fulfillment of all of God’s promises. He was saying to all who could hear, “Remember, and do not forget, that this cross will not have the final say.”

Drama: Jesus on the cross

Jesus’ bones would not be broken.

Prophecy Reader: Prophecy: (Numbers 9:12)

“They must not leave any of it till morning or break any of its bones. When they celebrate the Passover, they must follow all the regulations.”

Narrator:

This symbolic prophecy associates Jesus as the Passover Lamb. This lamb was to be without blemish, a male, and without any bones broken. After being slaughtered, its blood was to be applied to the doorposts of the houses of the Israelites, to prevent the destroyer from killing their firstborn.

Fulfillment Reader: Fulfillment: (John 19:33, 36)

“But when they came to Jesus and found that He was already dead, they did not break His legs.”

“These things happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled.”

Narrator:

Today, the blood of Jesus does for us, what the blood of the Passover lamb foreshadowed. He became the Passover lamb for us, the Lamb of God offered up as a sacrifice to save us from death caused by our sins. As we accept His blood as a covering for us we also are protected from the Destroyer, and from the Second Death. On this Resurrection Morning we proclaim to you that Satan, death, and sin have been defeated for all of eternity through our Savior Jesus Christ!

Drama: Jesus on the cross with Mary (mother of Jesus) and Mary Magdalene looking on and a soldier guarding the cross.

The Messiah would be raised in three days.

Prophecy Reader: Prophecy: (Hosea 6:2)

“After two days He will revive us; on the third day he will restore us, that we may live in His presence.”

Jonah 1:17

“But the Lord provided a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was inside the fish three days and three nights.”

Matthew 12:40

“For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.”

John 2:19

“Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple , and I will raise it again in three days.”

Narrator:

Jesus was raised back to life three days after His crucifixion, just as prophecied and just as He promised. Many have tried to disprove the fact of His resurrection. But, He appeared many times to individuals and groups of people following His resurrection before He returned to heaven.

Fulfillment Reader: Fulfillment:

His first appearance was to Mary Magdalene, on that early Sunday morning. (Mark 16:9; John 20:10-18).

Jesus appeared to the women returning from the tomb. (Matt. 28:9-10).

Jesus appeared to two disciples on the road to Emmaus. (Luke 24:13-32; Mark 16:12-13).

He appeared to Peter in Jerusalem. (Luke 24:34; 1 Corinthians 15:5).

He appeared to His disciples and other followers in a locked room in Jerusalem. (Luke 24:36-43; John 20:19-23).

A week later, Jesus again appeared to his disciples behind locked doors. (John 20:24-29).

Jesus appeared to seven of his disciples on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. (John 21:1-24).

Jesus was seen by 500 believers at one time. (1 Cor. 15:6).

He appeared to James. (1 Cor. 15:7).

He appeared to eleven disciples on a mountain in Galilee. (Matt. 28:18-20).

Jesus walked with his disciples along the road to Bethany, on the Mount of Olives, and then ascended into Heaven. (Luke 24:50-53).

Drama: Focus on the empty tomb

“I Will Rise” – Chris Tomlin
Sung by students

Closing:

The message of the love of Christ is so simple that even a small child can accept the message without question, and so immense that we can live an entire lifetime and not be able to grasp the extent of its meaning. Philosophers and theologians throughout history have attempted to rationalize and reason out why the Creator of all that exists would send His Son, Jesus to earth, knowing in detail all he would have to endure. Scorned, ridiculed, rejected, beaten beyond recognition, and hung on a cross and crucified for all to see. The Son of the Most High God enduring the shame of the cross, for the sin and release of everyone that has or ever will live here on earth.

It is impossible to make sense of His love, or mankind's response, other than to personally experience the salvation He made possible through the cross and the resurrection. God knew the end from the beginning, and He knew what Christ would endure. He told us the same through the prophecies spoken long before His coming.

This morning, we have shared with you the truth from God's Word concerning Jesus. God has made it impossible to miss the reality of Jesus through the fulfillment of just the few prophecies we shared with you. It is theoretically impossible for even these few to be fulfilled in the life of one person, let alone all the other prophecies that could have been shared. He came, not to die a pointless death, but to give it as a ransom, the sinless, perfect Son of God for

sinner, for us. This is why this morning is a remembrance, and a celebration, of His great love for us, our hope for eternity through the covering of our sins.

Our sins, apart from Christ, will bring God's judgment, and sentence us to be condemned to hell forever. Our acceptance of His sacrifice to cover our sins will bring God's mercy in judgment, and we will spend eternity in heaven with Him. God has given us the freedom to choose. If you haven't already done so, choose Christ. Choose to give your life to Him. He has already chosen to give His life for you. Allow the resurrection we celebrate this Easter to be one when you receive release from your sins, and receive new life through receiving Jesus Christ as your Savior.

Student Worship Team

Congregational Singing – "Jesus Messiah" – Chris Tomlin

Closing: Closing Prayer