

**August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2005**  
**Healing Service**  
**Sermon**

These words from the Book of Isaiah echo the speeches delivered in ancient courtrooms. The king—who is also the judge—is stating his reasons for the decision that is about to come down. The notion of God as our judge comes to us all too easily. Illness, depression, loss, grief and just plain old pain add up until we cannot help but feel that somehow we are in for it. God has seen fit to afflict us. That is a far too simple assessment, yet when we are in need of healing we are aware of all of our faults. In this fallen world we are finite. We have limits. We cannot battle every illness. We cannot do everything that we want to do. We cannot elude death. We cannot conquer Sin. In this world we stand condemned, in a wretched state before God our maker, with that eerie promise from the Creed echoing in our heads, “I believe in Jesus Christ...who will come again to judge the living and the dead.”

Friends of Christ, do not be perplexed, do not be afraid that Christ is our judge. You see, Christ has rigged the trial. In the resurrection of Christ God has promised us that as we were united with Christ in baptism so shall we surely be united with Christ in life. The resurrection is our future. Perfect immortality awaits us at the end, when Christ comes to judge. So by the time the trial starts, we're innocent. The Prophet records the words of God, “I have swept away your transgressions like clouds, your sins like mist. Turn to me, for I have redeemed

you.” Friends of Christ, we are guilty, but in the resurrection we are innocent, and we are people of the resurrection.

That promise for the future empowers us for the present. In Jesus the Christ God helps those who cannot help themselves; God heals us, we who cannot heal ourselves. The victory of God is already beginning. By the grace of God there are medicines, there are doctors and nurses, there are counselors, there are friends, there is the whole Body of Christ being raised daily and performing God’s renewing and redeeming work for the world. There is no escaping the limits of this world, but through Jesus the Christ we know that pain, sin and death do not have the last word. They cannot win, because God has already won. Amen.