

Sunday, May 10, 2020

Salem@Home

Thank you for joining us as we gather together as the family of God. Please center your heart and mind on worship. Imagine you are sitting in your pew. Your friends are across the aisle. While we may not physically be in the same place, we are all together today in worship.

Before you begin, please light a candle, place a bowl of water, flowers if available, and your Caring Cross in front of you.



As we continue to celebrate the fifty days of Easter, today's gospel includes Jesus' promise that he goes to prepare a place for his followers in his Father's house. Our baptism commissions us to share Jesus' mission in the world. As 1 Peter reminds us, we are a holy people, called to proclaim the one who called us out of darkness into light. In words and deeds we bear witness to the risen Christ—our way, our truth, our life.

Gathering

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Christ is risen, indeed! Alleluia!

CALL TO WORSHIP

Seeking peace in a broken world,
but also knowing God's peace through God's presence,
we pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Seeking peace in suffering, illness, and pain,
but also feeling God's peace through healing, prayer, and those who help,
we pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Seeking peace through our distress, depression, isolation, and fear,
but also feeling God's peace through the words of loved ones
and the hope we see in the world,
we pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Seeking peace through the pain of worshipping separately,
longing for our holy community to be gathering,
but also feeling peace through God's presence with each of us
as we worship together distantly,
we pray to the Lord.

Lord have mercy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, loving Lord.
We need you now, as we have needed you every day.
We cannot live without you.

Amen.

RETURN TO OUR BAPTISM

We begin our worship with water because we use water to baptize, and this is where our life in God's promise begins. We ask God to be present with us here in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

(Remember your baptism by dipping your finger in your water bowl and making the sign of the cross on your forehead as you repeat the following words.)

I am God's Child. I am loved. I am forgiven. I have a place in God's kingdom. Walk wet in this promise of life. **Amen**

GREETING

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, your Son Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. Give us grace to love one another, to follow in the way of his commandments, and to share his risen life with all the world, for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Word

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING ~ Acts 7:55-60

⁵⁵Filled with the Holy Spirit, [Stephen] gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶"Look," he said, "I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!" ⁵⁷But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. ⁵⁸Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him; and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." ⁶⁰Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he died.

GOSPEL READING ~ John 14:1-14

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. ²In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. ⁴And you know the way to the place where I am going." ⁵Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" ⁶Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have

seen him.”

⁸Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.” ⁹Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? ¹⁰Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. ¹¹Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. ¹²Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.”

ELCA BOOK OF FAITH DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

(For those who have other people in your household, you may discuss these as a family. If you live alone, call a friend and discuss the questions with them!)

- 1. What scares, confuses, or challenges me in this text? What do I have questions about?**
- 2. What delights me in this text? What is my favorite part, and why?**
- 3. What stories or memories does this text stir up in me? How does this story connect to my life?**
- 4. What is God up to in this text? What is God calling me to do or to be because of this message?**

CREED

We believe in one God,

**the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,

**the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

For us and for our salvation

**he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;

he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,*
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYERS

Still worshipping from our homes, but with our hearts bonded into one, let us pray for all who are in need, responding to each petition with words from today's psalm, "make haste to deliver us."

Build us up, mothering God, that like living stones we embody the strength that only you can give. Nurture all the baptized with the milk of your word. As you provided the early church with the apostle Matthias, fill now the churches' needs for leaders to serve your holy people.

O God, incline your ear to us:

Make haste to deliver us.

Form us to be humble participants in your complex creation. We praise your power in evolving a magnificent earth, from flowering trees to tropical rainstorms, from black holes to beloved pets. Lead us to respect your wondrous earth with both all that creates and all that destroys.

O God, incline your ear to us:

Make haste to deliver us.

Assist the leaders of nations to find and follow your ways of justice. Guide their way through the challenges of pandemic and poverty. Protect governors and legislators from sickness and burn-out. Despite our own considerable needs, keep us mindful of the needs of others, especially refugees and prisoners.

O God, incline your ear to us:

Make haste to deliver us.

Accompany those who are sick, sorrowful, or confused. Comfort them in suffering, ease their distress, and carry their burdens. We beg you to protect us from the coronavirus, and we pray for those we name in our hearts before you (*Duane, Mary, Darleen and all others on our hearts and minds today*).

O God, incline your ear to us:

make haste to deliver us.

Sustain those who mother infants and children. Uphold the parents and grandparents who now must school their children. Provide enough food and resources for families. Grant safe pregnancy and delivery to expectant parents, and minister to those who endure infertility and miscarriage. Bless the countless relatives, medical workers, and hospice volunteers who give to others mothering care. Embrace all for whom today's cultural celebration of mothers is difficult.

O God, incline your ear to us:

Make haste to deliver us.

Always, loving God, we are bold to add our own petitions:

A longer period of silence.

O God, incline your ear to us:

Make haste to deliver us.

We remember before you for all who have died in the faith, those like Stephen martyred for the faith, those struck down by the coronavirus, and those whom we name now in our hearts. At the end, bring us all to you, who are our way, our truth, and our life.

O God, incline your ear to us:

Make haste to deliver us.

With bold confidence in your love, almighty God, we place all for whom we pray into your eternal care; through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you all

And also with you

Take time to today to call, text, or write a friend or family member and share Christ's peace with them!

OFFERING

We very much appreciate your continued giving and generosity at this time. Checks may be mailed to the church. All mail is currently being held at the Albert Lea Post Office and will be picked up 1 – 2 times per week. Your offerings will remain secure.

OFFERING PRAYER

Almighty God,
you give us the joy of celebrating our Lord's resurrection.
Give us also the joys of life in your service,
and bring us at last to the full joy of life eternal,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.
Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

**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.**

Sending

BLESSING

May the One who brought forth Jesus from the dead
raise you to new life, fill you with hope,
and turn your mourning into dancing.
Almighty God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit,

bless you now and forever.

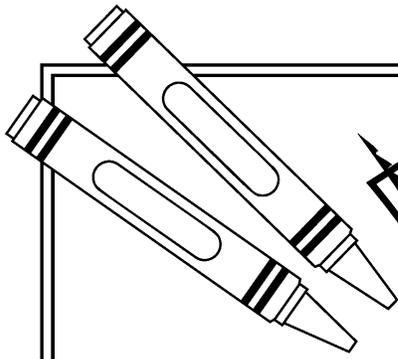
Amen.

DISMISSAL

Christ is risen, just as he said.

Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!

Thanks be to God. Alleluia!



PUZZLE

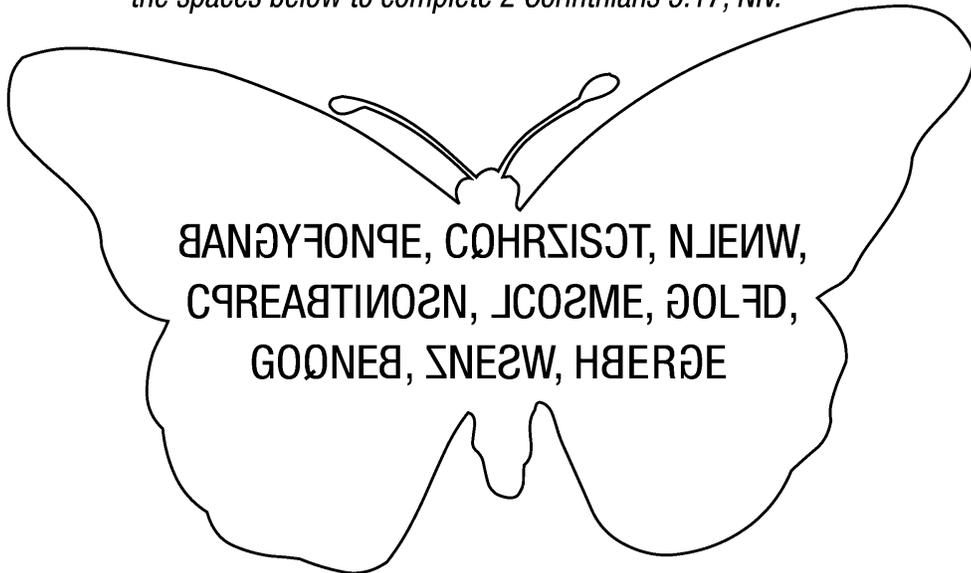
Transformation **POWER**



Just as the caterpillar becomes a butterfly,
God transforms us from old to new.



Directions: Cross out the backward letters. Write the remaining letters in order in the spaces below to complete 2 Corinthians 5:17, NIV.



Therefore, if _____ is in _____,

the _____ has _____:

The _____ has _____,

the _____ is _____!

2 C O R I N T H I A N S 5 : 1 7 , N I V

Answer: anyone, Christ, new, creation, come, old, gone, new, here