

Worship in the Home: August 9, 2020

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Worship in the Home

Tenth Sunday after Pentecost Lectionary 19 August 9, 2020

In this time of world-wide crisis, congregations throughout this [church](#) are not able to gather for worship as the body of Christ. While you cannot be together in person, we can hear the word of God and hold each other in prayer. We offer this brief resource as an aid for prayer in the home. As with our prayers in the gathered assembly for worship, you are encouraged to prepare or adapt them locally for your context.

Elijah finds the presence of God not in earthquake, wind, or fire, but in the sound of sheer silence. When the disciples face a great storm on the sea, they cry out with fear. Jesus says: "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid." Amid the storms of life, we gather to seek the calm presence of Christ that soothes our fears. In comforting words of scripture and in the refreshing bread and cup of the eucharist, God grants us peace and sends us forth to be a sign of God's presence to others.

Let us pray.

O God our defender, storms rage around and within us and cause us to be afraid. Rescue your people from despair, deliver your sons and daughters from fear, and preserve us in the faith of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

First Reading: 1 Kings 19:9-18

On Mount Horeb, where God had appeared to Moses with typical signs of God's presence—earthquake, wind, and fire—Elijah now experienced God in "sheer silence." God assured Elijah that he is not the only faithful believer. Seven thousand Israelites are still loyal. God instructed Elijah to anoint two men as kings and to anoint Elisha as his own successor.

⁹At Horeb, the mount of God, Elijah came to a cave, and spent the night there.

Then the word of the Lord came to him, saying, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" ¹⁰Elijah answered, "I have been very zealous for the Lord, the God of hosts; for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away."

¹¹The Lord said, "Go out and stand on the mountain before the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by." Now there was a great wind, so strong that it was splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an

earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; ¹²and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of sheer silence. ¹³When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. Then there came a voice to him that said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" ¹⁴He answered, "I have been very zealous for the Lord, the God of hosts; for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away." ¹⁵Then the Lord said to him, "Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus; when you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael as king over Aram. ¹⁶Also you shall anoint Jehu son of Nimshi as king over Israel; and you shall anoint Elisha son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah as prophet in your place. ¹⁷Whoever escapes from the sword of Hazael, Jehu shall kill; and whoever escapes from the sword of Jehu, Elisha shall kill. ¹⁸Yet I will leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him."

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm: 85:8-13

⁸I will listen to what the Lord¹ God is saying;
for you speak peace to your faithful people and to those who turn their¹ hearts to you.
⁹Truly, your salvation is very near to¹ those who fear you,
that your glory may dwell¹ in our land.
¹⁰Steadfast love and faithfulness have¹ met together;
righteousness and peace have¹ kissed each other.
¹¹Faithfulness shall spring up¹ from the earth,
and righteousness shall look¹ down from heaven.
¹²The Lord will indeed¹ grant prosperity,
and our land will¹ yield its increase.
¹³Righteousness shall go before the Lord
and shall prepare for¹ God a pathway.

Second Reading: Romans 10:5-15

A right relationship with God is not something we achieve by heroic efforts. It is a gift received in the proclamation whose content is Jesus Christ. This proclaimed word creates our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Hence Christian proclamation is an indispensable component of God's saving actions.

⁵Moses writes concerning the righteousness that comes from the law, that "the person who does these things will **live** by them." ⁶But the righteousness that comes from faith says, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down) ⁷or "Who will descend into the abyss?" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). ⁸But what does it say?

"The word is near you,

on your lips and in your heart"

(that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); ⁹because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved. ¹¹The scripture says, "No one who believes in the Lord will be put to shame." ¹²For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who ask for help. ¹³For, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

¹⁴But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to preach? ¹⁵And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel: Matthew 14:22-33

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Matthew's gospel typically portrays Jesus' disciples as people of "little faith," who fail despite their best intentions. In this story, Matthew shows how Jesus comes to the disciples when they are in trouble and sustains them in their time of fear and doubt.

²²Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, while he dismissed the crowds. ²³And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, ²⁴but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them. ²⁵And early in the [morning](#) Jesus came walking toward them on the sea. ²⁶But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out in fear. ²⁷But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, "Take heart, here I am; do not be afraid."

²⁸Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." ²⁹He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came toward Jesus. ³⁰But when Peter noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" ³¹Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?" ³²When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. ³³And those in the boat worshipped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Reflection

Having read these readings, think of this:

In the story, Elijah is in trouble, threatened with death. Peter is in trouble too, drowning in the chaos of the sea. Let the stories reflect our times. We and all our world also know the threat of death and chaos. But then, listen. God comes to Elijah not in wind, earthquake or fire, but in the sound of sheer silence and in a voice that gives him a mission. Those sounds may be little in the world, but they are the very presence of God. And Jesus comes to the storm-tossed disciples with a word of comfort, "Here I AM; do not be afraid." He comes as the very presence of God, the one named "I AM" in the scripture. As Paul says, this life-giving word from God is not far away, but here, now, in this time of prayer, on our lips and in our hearts. With the Psalmist, let us say, "I will listen to what the Lord God is saying." God in Christ is speaking peace to us right now. Then let us undertake the mission to speak that peace also to our neighbors.

If you have a hymnal (or using the graphic below), you might now sing or read "Eternal Father, Strong to Save" (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 756), "My Life Flows On in Endless Song" (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 763), "Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me" (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 755).

[Eternal Father, Strong to Save](#)

[My Life Flows On in Endless Song](#)

[Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me](#)

Confident of your care and upheld by the Holy Spirit, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need, responding to each petition with the words "Save us, we pray."

A brief silence.

For your church throughout the world, we pray: Strengthen the faith of all who believe. Speak to us through your word of power and mercy. Abide with those Christians who are isolated from others. Give wisdom and stamina to all preachers who bring your good news to the world.

A brief silence.

Hear us, holy God:

Save us, we pray.

For the well-being of your creation, we pray. Protect waterways, forests, lands, and wildlife from exploitation and abuse. Tame the storms that threaten human habitations. Maintain the health of [pets](#).

A brief silence.

Hear us, holy God:

Save us, we pray.

For the leaders of nations, we pray. Inspire those who govern to keep peace with their neighbors and to maintain justice for their citizens. Calm the world's violence. Strengthen the world's democracies, and keep autocrats in check. Uphold a free press around the globe.

A brief silence.

Hear us, holy God:

Save us, we pray.

For those in need we pray. For those who are unemployed, or homeless, or hungry, or hospitalized; for those whose money has run out; for those who are fearful of the future; and for those we name before you now:

A brief silence.

Hear us, holy God:

Save us, we pray.

For the world facing the coronavirus we pray. Sustain medical workers for their arduous tasks. Assist our Congress and governors in legislating wisely during the pandemic. Give wisdom to educators as they plan the fall semester. Give us kindness with one another and patience for ourselves. And we beg: give us a vaccine.

A brief silence.

Hear us, holy God:

Save us, we pray.

For the end to racial injustice we pray. Frustrate all prejudices between peoples that are based on ethnic origin or skin color. Unite into one body politic all who share this land.

A brief silence.

Hear us, holy God:

Save us, we pray.

For ourselves, we pray. Reach out your hand to us; save us when we are sinking; and receive now the petitions of our hearts.

A longer period of silence.

Hear us, holy God:

Save us, we pray.

We praise you, O God, for all who have died in the faith, for martyrs, for leaders in the struggle for civil rights, for victims of COVID-19, for those dear to us. Especially this week we glorify you for Mary, the mother of our Lord. Bring us at the end with all your saints into your everlasting life.

A brief silence.

Hear us, holy God:

Save us, we pray.

In the certain hope that nothing can separate us from your love, we offer these prayers to you; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

If you have a hymnal (or using the graphic below), you might now sing or read "When Peace Like a River" (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 785); "What A Fellowship, What a Joy Divine" (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 774).

[When Peace like a River \(It Is Well with My Soul\)](#)

[What a Fellowship, What a Joy Divine / Leaning on the Everlasting Arms](#)

Offering

Please remember to mail in your offerings so that Grace can continue to serve you.

Offering Prayer

God of goodness and growth, all creation is yours, and your faithfulness is as firm as the Heavens. Water and word, wine and bread: these are signs of your abundant grace. Nourish us through these gifts, that we might proclaim your steadfast love in our communities and in the world, through Jesus Christ, our strength and our song. **Amen.**

Then conclude with these prayers:

Let us pray.

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

O God of justice and love, we give thanks to you that you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, awaken us to the needs of others, and at the end bring all the world to your feast; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever.

Amen.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Almighty God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless us now and forever.

Amen.

Due to copyright restrictions, we are only able provide downloadable hymns that are in the public domain. Other suggestions provided above may be found in Evangelical Lutheran Worship. To purchase a copy of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* for the home, visit the [Augsburg Fortress website](#) or call 1-800-328-4648.

Devotional Music Links: For your individual or group devotion, you may choose to listen to the following choral recordings made available through Augsburg Fortress: "[An Irish Blessing](#)," "[Praise, Praise You Are My Rock](#)," "[Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen](#)."

Readings for the Week:

Monday (commemoration of Lawrence, deacon, martyr, died 258) Psalm 18:1-9. **Tuesday** (commemoration of Clare, Abbess of San Damiano, died 1253) Genesis 19:1-29. **Wednesday** Matthew 8:23-27. **Thursday** (commemoration of Florence Nightingale, died 1910; Clara Maass, died 1901; renewers of society) Psalm 67. **Friday** (commemoration of Maximilian Kolbe, died 1941; Kaj Munk, died 1944; martyrs) Isaiah 63:15-19. **Saturday** (Mary, Mother of Our Lord) Luke 1:46-55. **Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost** Isaiah 56:1, 6-8; Psalm 67; Romans 11:1-2a; Matthew 15:[10-20] 21-28.

Daily Prayer Resources are available, including simple forms of Morning, Evening, and Night Prayer; Responsive Prayer; and prayers for mealtimes and other occasions.

Reflection material: Gordon Lathrop. Intercessory Prayer: Gail Ramshaw

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Pastoral Message; August 4, 2020

While pondering what to include in this pastoral epistle, I ran across an article by Curt Brown in the April 19 Minneapolis paper. It's about a brutal 1916 attack from near this area. I'll have a comment afterward...

The glass eye sat in a box on a high kitchen sill. Olga Dahl King left it there because she found it uncomfortable, preferring to raise her children with her lid closed over her vacant eye socket.

"My grandmother loved to cook, but when she'd leave the kitchen, I'd sneak up to look at that artificial eye in its box when I was 5 or 6," said Jack McCauley, now 64. "I'd pull some chairs over to the ledge and climb up."

When family members asked about her missing eye, Olga blamed some naughty boys with a slingshot. McCauley didn't learn the real story until years after she died in 1974 at the age of 80, he said from his home in Chaska. "She didn't want to talk about it, which made sense," he said.

Born in 1984, Olga Dahl was the daughter of Swedish immigrants living near the Itasca County town of Warba. After graduating from Grand Rapids High School, about 15 miles northwest of the Warba farm, Olga became a teacher at 22 in the rural Round Lake school in northern Itasca County's Good Hope Township.

Leaving work during the first week of school on Sept. 20, 1916, Olga was attacked, dragged into the woods, raped, shot twice in the face and left for dead near the smoldering embers of a fire, her right wrist tied to a small balsam tree.

A.A. Clampett, an aging woodsman who lived nearby, smelled the smoke of the fire and found Olga in a spot that "had evidently been selected with great care" behind an uprooted spruce tree that provided "a sheltered retreat," according to the Grand Rapids Herald-Review.

Barely conscious, Olga was taken to a nearby house, where a doctor from Blackduck prescribed morphine and said surgery would be futile. One bullet had pierced her left cheek, while the second entered her left temple and destroyed her eye. The attacker had left a barely literate note, saying something about Olga being "too pretty for [her own] good."

The next morning, according to the Herald-Review, Olga was still alive. Two doctors, M.M. Hursh of Grand Rapids and a Dr. Binet of Deer River, "operated at once and pronounced the girl's chances of recovery to be excellent."

Years later, Olga remembered one of the doctors sleeping with a loaded gun beside the door in the house where she was being treated, in case the assailant returned. More than 200 woodsmen combed the rough, spruce-and-balsam terrain, looking for him.

Seven months later, in springtime, a spear fisherman removed a corpse lodged in a nearby creek. The body was badly decomposed, but McCauley said his grandmother was able to identify her assailant by the handcrafted, tree-shaped buttons on his coat. The man, whose name wasn't included in any of the accounts, apparently took his own life.

Shortly after the attack, Olga married Bill King, a woodsman and trapper who delivered wood to schools in the area. They likely met during those first days of school before the attack, when she would have lit a fire to warm the children from the September chill. The Kings had seven children, of whom the youngest, Myrtle, is in her 80s and lives in Hoyt Lakes.

Olga lived in Warba as a grandmother, across the farm road from her daughter Evelyn's family – including curious little Jack.

This story made me cringe over what happened to Olga. But it also made me cheer that she survived and thrived for the final 58 years of her life. She could have given up – some people have over lesser trauma.

The entire article does not say if Olga drew her emotional strength from Christian faith, but that's entirely possible. It's worked for me, and probably for thee. It sure worked for the martyrs.

Last Sunday we celebrated the Holy Spirit's power at the first Pentecost. That same power is available to each one of us for our trials and tribulations. When's the last time you called on the Lord for help, or in praise for all your blessings? God is waiting to hear from you. No better time than now!

Peace,

Pastor Bill Sass

Please keep in your prayers this week: Kevin Johnson, Barbara Metzger, Rob Johnson and Steve Lindberg (Streeter Family Friend's & Kin), Noah Klenken (Fred Fixsen's Nephew), Cal Curtis & Patty Thompson (Carole Holten's Son-in-Law & Sister), Bill Warner, David Warner, Emily (Ben & Casey's Daughter), Terry Newgard.

Friends & Family of: Ron & Ellen Burke who passed away.