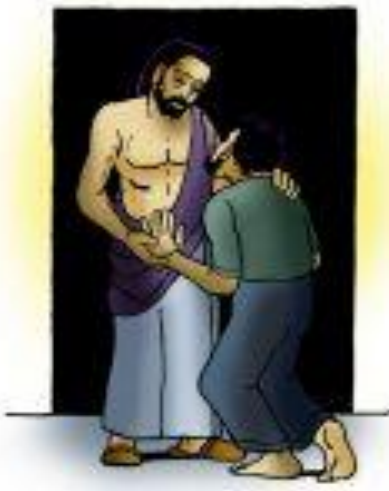


Worship in the Home: April 11, 2021

Posted on April 6, 2021 by ELCA Worship



Worship in the Home

Second Sunday of Easter, Year B

April 11, 2021

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.

Find a peaceful place to pray, perhaps a table. You may wish to light a candle and place a bowl of water in remembrance of your baptism. One person may lead this acclamation and then pray the Prayer of the Day.

The Easter season is a week of weeks, seven Sundays when we play in the mystery of Christ's presence, mostly through the glorious Gospel of John. Today we gather with the disciples on the first Easter, and Jesus breathes the Spirit on us. With Thomas we ask for a sign, and Jesus offers us his wounded self in the broken bread. From frightened individuals we are transformed into a community of open doors, peace, forgiveness, and material sharing such that no one among us is in need.

Alleluia. Christ is Risen.

Christ is Risen indeed. Alleluia.

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

Amen.

Let us pray.

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

Almighty God, with joy we celebrate the day of our Lord's resurrection. By the grace of Christ among us, enable us to show the power of the resurrection in all that we say and do, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

First Reading: Acts 4:32-35

While the apostles testified to others about the resurrection of Jesus, the early Christian community shared what they owned or sold their possessions to help their fellow believers who were in need.

³²Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. ³³With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. ³⁴There was not a needy person among them, for as many owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. ³⁵They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 133

¹How good and how pleasant it is,
when kindred live together in unity!

²It is like fine oil upon the head, flowing down upon the beard,
upon the beard of Aaron, flowing down upon the collar ¹ of his robe.

³It is like the dew of Hermon flowing down upon the ¹ hills of Zion.
For there the LORD has commanded the blessing: life forevermore.

Second Reading: 1 John 1:1 — 2:2

The opening of this letter serves as a reality check. The reality of God is light, but our confessed reality has been sin. God cleanses us from our sinful reality through Christ's death so that we live in fellowship with Christ and walk in God's light.

¹We declare to you what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life — ²this life was revealed, and we have seen it and testify to it, and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us—³we declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you also may have communion with us; and truly our communion is with the Father and with Jesus Christ, the Son. ⁴We are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.

⁵This is the message we have heard from Jesus Christ and proclaim to you, that God is light and in God there is no darkness at all. ⁶If we say that we have communion with God while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do what is true; ⁷but if we walk in the light as God is in the light, we have communion with one another, and the blood of Jesus, God's Son, cleanses us from all sin. ⁸If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹If we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰If we say that we have not sinned, we make God a liar, and God's word is not in us.

^{2:1}My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, ²who is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel: John 20:19-31

The holy gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

The story of Easter continues as the risen Jesus appears to his disciples. His words to Thomas offer a blessing to all who entrust themselves in faith to the risen Lord.

¹⁹When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Judeans, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁰After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." ²²When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive

the Holy Spirit. ²³If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

²⁴But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

²⁶A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them, and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁷Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." ²⁸Thomas said to Jesus, "My Lord and my God!" ²⁹Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

³⁰Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book. ³¹But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing, you may have life in his name.

The gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

Reflection

Having read these readings, think on this:

We see and sometimes touch wounds all around us, but these wounds are not usually life-giving. They are our own wounds and wounds we have caused in others. They are the wounds of a suffering humanity. But they are also the wounds the earth has suffered, not least at our hands. They are signs of our sin. But Sunday after Sunday, through word and sacrament, we encounter Jesus Christ, and we discover that he shares our wounds. He is risen, but the wounds of his crucifixion have not disappeared. These signs of God sharing our need and death have become instead the source of the Holy Spirit giving life, of forgiveness proclaimed to us and by us to others, and of peace in shared community. In faith, we may see and touch those life-giving wounds by hearing the scriptures, by celebrating the holy communion, and by turning in empathy and with shared resources to our neighbors and our world.

If you have a hymnal, you may now sing or read "O Sons and Daughters, Let Us Sing" (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 386), "The Risen Christ" (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 390). Selected hymns are provided below for those without a hymnal at home.

[O Sons and Daughters, Let Us Sing](#)

Then pray these intercessions:

On this second Sunday of Easter, let us pray for all in any need, responding to each petition with the words "Send us your peace, O God."

A brief silence.

O faithful God, grant the joy of your peace to our pastors, to all those who minister among us, and to all the baptized, especially during times of hardship. Help us to support one another's churches, to cease rivalries, and to strengthen our ecumenical contacts.

A brief silence.

Hear our prayers for the church:

Send us your peace, O God.

Grant the beauty of your peace to all of nature, its springtime flowers, its wildlife, its terrains. Restore waters, cleanse the air, and save lands that have been misused. Inspire us to care for the whole of your creation.

A brief silence.

Hear our prayers for the earth:

Send us your peace, O God.

Grant the power of your peace to the nations of the world. Halt all impulses toward violence between nations, in our city streets, and inside our homes. Lead our government into wise

decisions concerning migrants, especially the youths. Bring an end to ethnic prejudices in our land, and guide judges and juries to enact justice throughout each court proceeding.

A brief silence.

Hear our prayers for this country:

Send us your peace, O God.

Grant the abundance of your peace to all agencies of care in church and government. Show us the best ways to uphold and support those in need. Inspire children to share. Open our hearts to a world so filled with suffering, and make us always more generous with the gifts you have given us.

A brief silence.

Hear our prayers for a world of good will:

Send us your peace, O God.

Grant the well-being of your peace to all who suffer. Visit all who are ill, especially those suffering from Covid-19, those without access to the vaccines, and those with strained medical resources. Comfort with your merciful presence those who are distanced from family and friends and all who are lonely or distressed. Receive our prayers especially for

A brief silence.

Hear our prayers for the sick:

Send us your peace, O God.

Grant each of us the hope that comes with your peace. Comfort each of us in sorrow, and receive our silent requests.

A longer period of silence.

Hear us as we pray for ourselves:

Send us your peace, O God.

We praise you for embracing your people with the wounded arms of Christ, and we bless you for all who died in the faith. At the end of all things, bring us with them into your everlasting peace.

A brief silence.

Hear our prayers for life beyond our understanding:

Send us your peace, O God.

In praise for the new life you grant us in Christ, we raise our prayers to you, trusting in your never-ending goodness and mercy, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen

If you have a hymnal, you may now sing or read "Peace, to Soothe Our Bitter Woes" (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 381), "We Walk by Faith" (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 635), "Let Your Peace Rain Upon Us / Yarabba ssalami" (All Creation Sings 989). Selected hymns are provided below for those without a hymnal at home.

[Peace, to Soothe Our Bitter Woes](#)

[Let Your Peace Rain upon Us](#)

Then conclude with these prayers:

Let us pray.

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

Praise to you, O God, for your Word of life:

creating a wondrous universe,
proclaiming freedom from captivity,
becoming the song of your people.

We praise you, O God, for your Word.

We praise you, O God, for your Word.

Your Word is made flesh among us:

with Mary in the garden, you call us by name.

With Thomas beholding your wounds, you call us to believe.

With sheep of others folds, we are gathered by your voice.

Your Word names our death and our life:

a seed that falls into the earth and dies,

rain and snow that come down from heaven to water the earth,
a vine in which we abide.

Through your Word, you appoint us to bear fruit, fruit that will last.

We bless you, O God, for your Word.

We bless you, O God, for your Word.

By your living Word, we are witnesses of these things.

Breathe into us your Holy Spirit.

Open our minds to understand the scriptures.

Give us wisdom to declare what we have heard,

what we have seen with our eyes,

what we have looked at and touched with our hands

concerning the word of life.

Fill us with strength to love, not in word or speech alone,

but in truth and action.

With every creature in heaven and on earth

and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them,

we join in the hymn of all creation, as

we thank you, O God, for your life-giving Word.

We thank you, O God, for your life-giving Word.

Amen.

Offering Prayer

God of love, you call us beloved children and welcome us to your table. Receive our lives and the gifts we offer. Abide with us and send us in service to a suffering world; for the sake of your beloved Child, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Please remember to mail in your offerings so that Grace can continue to serve you. (Our mailbox has a lock on it, so is secure.)

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

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.

Then speak the Blessing:

May our glorious God grant us a spirit of wisdom
to know and to love the risen Lord Jesus.

The God of life,

Father, + Son and Holy Spirit, bless us now and forever.

Amen.

Alleluia. Christ is Risen.

Christ is Risen indeed. Alleluia.

Devotional Music Links: For your individual or group devotion, you may choose to listen to the following choral recordings made available through Augsburg Fortress: "[This Joyful Eastertide](#);" "[Easter Anthem in Celtic Style: Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Strong Bands](#);" "[I Know that My Redeemer Lives](#)."

Readings for the Week:

Monday Psalm 135. **Tuesday** Daniel 6:1-28. **Wednesday** Isaiah 26:1-15. **Thursday** Psalm 4. **Friday** 1 John 2:26-28. **Saturday** Luke 22:24-30. **Third Sunday of Easter** Acts 3:12-19; Psalm 4; 1 John 3:1-7; Luke 24:36b-48.

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

Due to copyright restrictions, we are only able to provide downloadable hymns that are in the public domain and selected hymns for limited use. Other suggestions provided above may be found in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*. To purchase copies of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* and *All Creation Sings* for the home, visit the [Augsburg Fortress website](#) or call 1-800-328-4648. Selected hymns from *All Creation Sings* will be provided for limited use.

Reflection text: Gordon Lathrop. Intercessory Prayer: Gail Ramshaw

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Thank you to those who clean the Church following worship.

Special Meeting, April 11th following worship.

Synod Assembly, 30 April – 2 May.

Grubby Sunday, May 2nd, No potluck – hopefully next year.

Please keep in your prayers this week: Kevin Johnson, Barbara Metzger, Rob Johnson and Steve Lindberg (Streeter Family Friend's & Kin), Cal Curtis & Patty Thompson (Carole Holten's Son-in-Law & Sister), Emily (Ben & Casey's Daughter), Bob Broberg, Carole Holten, Donna Jackson-Hein, Lois Goossen & Holly (Friends of Newgard's).

Pastoral Mid-week Message for April 7, 2021

A man saw a boy flying a kite. Observing something a little peculiar about the way he walked with the string, he approached and found the lad was blind. "Do you like flying your kite?" he asked. "Oh, yes sir," was the reply.

"But how is that, when you cannot see it?" was the next question.

"I can't see it," said the boy, "but I can feel it tugging!"

An old hulk of a ship was sunk in the mud of a river. All efforts to raise it had failed. Someone had noticed the river was affected by the tide. So, at low tide, he harnessed an empty barge to the old hulk with strong chains and cables. Slowly and surely, the waters came flooding in and the great lifting power of the ocean surged under that barge. Something like that happens to us when we are linked by faith, worship, and prayer, to our Lord. The tide of His Spirit lifts us from the mud of our sins, and follies, and defeats.

Can you feel that tide lifting you up? You need not sink in despair. Your life is not over. At any age – whatever your situation – it is never too late to begin building a new and more satisfying life. The risen Christ can provide the foundation for that life.

You see, many of us have built our lives on much more fragile foundations. There was a scientific paper with the intriguing title "If You Build Your House on a Crack in the Earth, It's Your Own Fault." It's nice to know writers of scientific papers have a sense of humor. Nobody would knowingly build their house on a crack in the earth. But people do build their lives on fragile foundations.

What is it that you have built your life on – your job? Your family? Your health? Your good looks? Can't you see what a fragile foundation each of these is? Using Jesus' analogy of the house built on sand, we can easily see how one of life's treacherous storms can quickly wash away such a foundation.

But there is one foundation that cannot be washed away. It is the foundation of our faith in Jesus Christ. He wants to be the firm foundation of your life.

Campbell Morgan wrote when Holman Hunt painted that wonderful picture of the thorn-crowned King outside the door, knocking, he showed his picture to his friend before it was publicly exhibited. His friend looked at the kingly figure of Christ, at the rough and ready door, and at the clinging tendrils which had spread themselves over the door. Suddenly, he said, "Hunt, you have made a terrible mistake here." The artist asked, "What mistake have I made?" and the reply was, "Why, you have painted a door without a handle." Hunt replies, "that is not a mistake. The door has the handle on the inside."

The handle is on the inside. Only you can open the door. Christ is alive. He is calling your name. He wants to be your friend and the foundation of your life.