

AUGUSTANA

where Lutherans and Anglicans worship together

EASTER 7 May 24, 2020

WOV Service of Word & Prayer

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 you all.

And also with you.

GATHERING **This Easter Celebration**

This Easter celebration is not like ones we've known.
 We pray in isolation, we sing the hymns alone.
 We're distant from our neighbors — from worship leaders, too.
 No flowers grace the chancel to set a festive mood.

Our joy won't come from worship that's in a crowded room
 but from the news of women who saw the empty tomb.
 Our joy comes from disciples who ran with haste to see —
 who heard that Christ is risen, and then, by grace, believed.

In all the grief and suffering, may we remember well:
 Christ suffered crucifixion and faced the powers of hell.
 Each Easter bears the promise: Christ rose that glorious day!
 Now nothing in creation can keep your love away.

We thank you that on Easter, your church is blessed to be
 a scattered, faithful body that's doing ministry.
 In homes and in the places of help and healing, too,
 we live the Easter message by gladly serving you.

Tune: Samuel Sebastian Wesley, 1864 ("The Church's One Foundation")

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CHILDREN'S TIME

Multi tool - my Swiss army knife -- one tool that is really a whole bunch of tools

Plaid – the colours woven together to make a pattern. A bunch of colours that make one plaid

It's a bit like: Worshiping together--apart. Opposites that we put together to try to explain how many and one can be the same.

They are all ways to describe something that is very hard to put into words. But Jesus tried many ways to explain to his followers how he and God the creator and God the Spirit and Jesus were all united. And Jesus tried to explain to his followers how they also were all one family of believers even though they were also separate people.

And that is something we can probably never completely understand or describe.

SCRIPTURE SONG

Refrain: Salvation belongs to our God and to Christ the Lamb forever and ever.

Great and wonderful are your deeds, O God of the universe
 Just and true are your ways, O Ruler of all the nations.
 Who can fail to honor you, Lord, and sing the glory of your name? /refrain

For you alone are the Holy One.
 All nations will draw near and worship before you,
 For your just and holy works have been revealed. /refrain

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray: Holy God, send your promised Spirit of revelation and wisdom, so that, in the blessed freedom of hope, we may witness to the grace of forgiveness and sing with joy to the One who makes us one. Amen

SCRIPTURE READINGS:

Acts 1:6-14

So when they had come together, they asked him, 'Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?' He replied, 'It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by

his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up towards heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up towards heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.'

Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away. When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

1 Peter 5:6-11

Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you. Discipline yourselves; keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour. Resist him, steadfast in your faith, for you know that your brothers and sisters throughout the world are undergoing the same kinds of suffering. And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, support, strengthen, and establish you. To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Word of life, Jesus Christ, all glory to you!

Word of life Jesus Christ, all praise to you!

Our hearts burn within us while you open to us the Scriptures.

Word of life, Jesus Christ, all glory to you!

Word of life, Jesus Christ, all praise to you!

GOSPEL:

The Holy Gospel according to St. John chapter 17:1-11 **Glory to you, O Lord**

After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, 'Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.

'I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.

The Gospel of our Lord, **Praise to you, O Christ**

MEDITATION

A line from a poem has been going through my head all week: "They also serve who only stand and wait" It's from a poem by John Milton, a poet of the 17th century. Perhaps it has been going through my head because I have also been thinking about that day on Mt. Olivet when Jesus ascended to heaven and the eleven -- who used to be the twelve -- just stood there waiting. Apparently bemused by what had happened ... not really knowing what had happened. And not exactly sure what to do.

It's complicated – life is complicated.

And that leads me to our reading from John's gospel which is also complicated with many images of unity inter-woven. John tries so hard to describe the un-describable. John valiantly attempts to explain to us how God the Creator and Jesus are one and yet not just one. And how we the followers of Jesus are also one and yet not just one. I don't think John is not trying to confuse us. I think John is trying to reassure us. And it is OK to not completely understand: They also serve who stand and wonder.

The 11 who used to be twelve took the short journey from where they were standing and waiting back to the upper room in Jerusalem and the other disciples of Jesus. And for a time they were still ...but again "They also serve who only stand and wait" ... And a time of prayer & wondering were part of their service.

Many say that Milton wrote the poem with this line in it because of his blindness: How could he do what he felt called to do with this handicap? But I believe he was also waiting to see what his faith – which could not be discarded -- was calling him to during the time of political and religious upheaval that he was living through. Sometimes to serve means to stand and wait. When the disciples were blind to the path ahead they needed to take time to stand and wait. When we are blind to the path ahead we also need to serve by standing and waiting.

And we are blind to the path ahead ... I am asked often when will we return to the church? When will things be normal again? Like the disciples I do not know exactly how our future is going to unfold. But, in the midst of my ignorance, I am assured of the unity of care that comes to us through God. And I am assured that though we are apart we are still together.

We and the disciples serve as we wait and pray for guidance on how to proceed. For the disciples they were led to those concentric circles of care radiating out: Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the whole world. Gradually enlarging their circle.

I think being outside of a church building might help us to do the same as we pray for guidance. Kind of like our own version of the different phases in our relaunching Saskatchewan. We are asking for God's guidance as we reach out to those closest to us and then on and on in ever enlarging circles. And as the disciples did we ask for God's guidance every step of the way. And like them we are also assured that we are not alone in this. Amen.

SONG "Beautiful Savior" # 838 ELW

Beautiful Savior, King of creation,
 Son of God and Son of Man!
 Truly I'd love thee, truly I'd serve thee,
 light of my soul, my joy, my crown.

Fair are the meadows, fair are the woodlands,
 robed in flow'rs of blooming spring;
 Jesus is fairer, Jesus is purer,
 he makes our sorrowing spirit sing.

Beautiful Savior, Lord of the nations,
 Son of God and Son of Man!
 Glory and honor, praise, adoration,
 now and forevermore be thine!

OUR RESPONSE TO THE WORD

- Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

- Prayer of Confession

God has given us the ministry of reconciliation. Therefore, let us be reconciled to God and to one another. Gracious God, have mercy on us. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things done and left undone. Uphold us by your Spirit so that we may live and serve you in newness of life, to the honor and glory of your holy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

GOD'S RESPONSE TO US

Hear then God's response: God who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace we have been saved. In the name of + Jesus Christ our sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen us with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in our hearts through faith. **AMEN.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Each short prayer will end with the words "Lord in your mercy" and you can make the prayer your own by responding "**hear our prayer.**"

Uplifted by the promised hope of healing and resurrection, we join the people of God in all times and places in praying for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

(brief silence)

O God, call your people to be one, as you are one. Unite your church in the truth of your gospel, the love of our neighbour, and the call to proclaim your reign to all people. Lord in your mercy: **hear our prayer**

Breathe life into your creation. Guide your people as we explore the mysteries of the universe. We pray for scientists working to develop a vaccine for the corona virus. Guide us to safely ease restrictions as we begin to come out of isolation. Lord in your mercy: **hear our prayer**

Make your justice known among the nations of the earth. Grant wisdom to those who govern during challenging times. Protect those who live in the midst of strife, warfare, hunger, or illness. Protect the vulnerable especially refugees, the Iqbal and Alhamad/Wahid families; people living in poverty or crowded conditions, the elderly, those who already struggle with health issues, and those who are incarcerated. Lord in your mercy: **hear our prayer**

In the midst of political conflict and deteriorating peace talks, we thank you for faithful leaders in the Holy Land, especially Bishop Azar of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, and Archbishop Suheil of The Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem. Give them strength to speak out against injustices which eliminate the security and freedom of people. Give us that same courage to open our eyes to what is needed to protect those who are most vulnerable. Lord in your mercy: **hear our prayer**

Come to the aid of your children. We pray for all who grieve and we remember especially Kevin Ogilvie and Jann Boyd on the death of Kevin's son Hery, Georgina Krenn's family, and the family of Caron Parke. Hold them in your care. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

God of healing and rest, help those whose hearts are heavy and weighed down by isolation. We pray for all in need of healing in body and spirit especially: Jennie, Logan, William, Marcus, Brody, Karin, Anthony, Robert, Curtis, Linda, Marci, Earl, Janet, Gayle, Evelyn, Lisa, Danielle, Inger, Deanna, Carol, Wilma, Mary, and all who we name aloud or in the silence of our hearts(pause) May God's loving care bring healing. Lord in your mercy: **hear our prayer**

We give thanks for the communion of faith that goes beyond the walls of our church building, for the love of God that is embodied in our risen savior Jesus and for all gifts of healing and forgiveness, especially we thank you for those who use their gifts to help us through this pandemic: medical staff, caregivers, cleaners, grocery workers, truckers, and all those who work in essential services. Lord in your mercy: **hear our prayer**

Lord in your mercy: **hear our prayer**

Generous God, you call into your brilliant light all who have died. Give us faith to trust your promise of an eternal home. Lord in your mercy: **hear our prayer**

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

Pastor Marilyn: Knowing how God loves us as a Mother and Father we pray in the words Jesus taught us:

LORD'S PRAYER

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.

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you
 The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy,
 The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace. AMEN.

SENDING SONG Blest be the tie that binds ELW # 656

Blest be the tie that binds
 our hearts in Christian love;
 the unity of heart and mind
 is like to that above.

Before our Father's throne
 we pour our ardent prayers;
 our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,
 our comforts and our cares.

We share our mutual woes,
 our mutual burdens bear,
 and often for each other flows
 the sympathizing tear.

From sorrow, toil, and pain,
 and sin we shall be free;
 and perfect love and friendship reign
 through all eternity.

Go in Peace to love and serve our risen Lord. Alleluia!
Thanks be to God. Alleluia!