

CHRIST'S UNITED ✠ ST. JAMES ✠ FRIEDENS LUTHERAN CHURCHES

Ashland/Pitman/Hegins

Wednesday of Easter 6 ✠ Service of Prayer ✠ May 20, 2020

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Greetings to you in the name of our crucified and risen Lord Jesus Christ.

Welcome to our weekly mid-week service of Word, reflection, and prayer. If you have someone, you'd like us to pray for, let us know. Send us an e-mail or call. Be aware we will only use first names out of concerns for privacy.

This service is brought to you thanks to the skills of our technicians, Gary Klinger and Steven Wolfgang.

- If you have any pastoral care needs, do not hesitate to call Pastor Mark or Pastor Laura at the Lutheran parsonage: **570-652-1951**. And please visit our websites for more information.
- And we are sure that you are aware that the Church, like so many other organizations, is struggling during this time. Your offering makes a huge difference as we try to keep doing the work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

God bless you as we journey together in confident hope.

HYMN ELW#338 "BENEATH THE CROSS OF JESUS"

1 Beneath the cross of Jesus
for my abiding place;
I ask no other sunshine than
the sunshine of his face;
content to let the world go by,
to know no gain nor loss,
my sinful self my only shame,
my glory all, the cross.

3 I take, O cross, your shadow
I long to take my stand;
the shadow of a mighty rock
within a weary land,
a home within a wilderness,
a rest upon the way,
from the burning of the noontide heat
and burdens of the day.

2 Upon the cross of Jesus,
my eye at times can see
the very dying form of one
who suffered there for me.
And from my contrite heart, with tears,
two wonders I confess:
the wonder of his glorious love
and my unworthiness.

Text: Elizabeth C. Clephane, 1830-1869

PSALM PRAYER

Merciful God, refuge in times of trouble, our only hope in living, and our only salvation in dying: keep us in your care, that we may always praise you and faithfully proclaim your name before the nations; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

LUKE 23:50-55

⁵⁰Now there was a good and righteous man named Joseph, who, though a member of the council, ⁵¹had not agreed to their plan and action. He came from the Jewish town of Arimathea, and he was waiting expectantly for the kingdom of God. ⁵²This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. ⁵³Then he took it down, wrapped it in a linen cloth, and laid it in a rock-hewn tomb where no one had ever been laid. ⁵⁴It was the day of Preparation, and the sabbath was beginning. ⁵⁵The women who had come with him from Galilee followed, and they saw the tomb and how his body was laid.

MEDITATION *Commemoration of St. Helena, mother of Constantine, ca. 330*

HYMN “OPEN MY EYES THAT I MAY SEE”

1. Open my eyes, that I may see
Glimpses of truth thou hast for me;
Place in my hands the wonderful key
That shall unclasp and set me free.
Silently now I wait for thee,
Ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my eyes, illumine me, Spirit divine!

2. Open my ears, that I may hear
Voices of truth thou sendest clear;
And while the wavenotes fall on my ear,
Everything false will disappear.
Ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my ears, illumine me, Spirit divine!

Silently now I wait for thee,

3. Open my mouth, and let me bear
Gladly the warm truth everywhere;
Open my heart and let me prepare
Love with thy children thus to share.
Silently now I wait for thee,
Ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my heart, illumine me, Spirit divine!

Words and Music by Clara H. Scott, pub. 1895

PRAYER IN THE FACE OF A PANDEMIC

Response

Si - lent - ly now I wait for Thee, Read - y, my God, Thy will to see;
O - pen my eyes, il - lu - mine me, Spir - it di - vine!
O - pen my ears, il - lu - mine me, Spir - it di - vine!
O - pen my heart, il - lu - mine me, Spir - it di - vine! A-men.

Healing, sustaining, and restoring God, whose grace is greater than frightening viruses and frustrating vulnerability, breathe new life into our hurting world and our daunting journey.

Remind us of the trustworthiness of your promise, that you will never leave us nor forsake us. Reawaken our souls to this Resurrection truth—that our fear is not our governor; that our frailty does not have the final word to speak; and that our suffering is never the end of our story.

We hurt with the crisis of this coronavirus. We break with those who are broken in this global pandemic.

We remember those who are afflicted with the virus, all who are sick, and anyone in need of our prayers: Nellie, Gail, Jeanie, Lois, Richard, Paul, Nancy and her family, Adrienne and her fellow health care workers, Richard, Deb, Carolyn, Logan, Mary, Joyce, Debbie, Alexis, Renee, Ralph, Dave, Kathryn, Vicki, and Garth.

Come, Holy Spirit, our comforting shepherd. Open our eyes to your gracious mercy. Bring to these hurting souls a healing that restores, a strength that sustains, and a joy so durable that nothing can diminish it.

Response

We remember medical professionals on whom our lives depend, who are placing themselves in harm's way daily to provide aid to afflicted patients, especially Libby. Equip them with strength beyond their

strength, courage beyond their courage, and a fresh awareness of how deeply their work matters.

We remember the most vulnerable in our midst: The homebound, nursing home-bound, and hospitalized; those whose vitality belies their years; those whose financial vulnerability inspires anguish; those whose addiction cries out for a journey of recovery; those whose depression generates a crippling sense of isolation. Come, Lord Jesus. Come as a companion, encourager, and deliverer in every circumstance where people feel alone, isolated, marginalized, and desperate.

We remember those whose employment is severely affected by bans, mandates, and restrictions. Come, Holy Spirit! Open our ears to hear your truth that sets us free. Bring unexpected abundance and unforeseen blessing. *Response*

We remember families that must both accommodate new realities and adjust to unplanned rhythms. Come, parenting God, and instill within our families a new sense of patience, a joyful playfulness, and a renewed zeal for loving.

We remember your Church, taken out of its normal patterns and practices. Holy God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—awaken in your church a vision for what it means to connect in the midst of disconnection, to engage in the midst of disengagement, to bless in a season of reoriented blessing.

We remember those who are cynical about this crisis—and those who feel secure and unthreatened. Crucified and Resurrected Christ, humble us in our arrogance; disrupt us in our artificial sense of safety; and transform our cynicism into an eagerness to stand alongside those who are hurting.

Let your love be our breathing. Let your compassion be our heartbeat. Let your mind become our mind. Come, Holy Spirit! Open our mouths to declare your truth everywhere. Let your Way be our way; your Truth our truth; your Life our life. *Response*

Most of all—Heartbroken, Weeping, and Resurrecting God—remind us that you are not watching our struggle from a distance. Speak to us afresh the truth that you are with us, allowing your tears to

commingle with ours, allowing your heart to break with ours, allowing your intimate grace to redeem our suffering, our sickness, and our sorrow.

In this season of Easter, where the empty tomb defies the stranglehold of death, usher us into the cadences of Resurrection, so that we might engage in the stewardship of life amid the trappings of death.

Come, Lord Jesus! Come, Creating and Transforming God! Come and bring wholeness in our brokenness, hope in our despair, healing in our hurting, life in our death.

Reform our hearts, O God. Redirect our way. On the canvas of our journey, display the colors of your grace.

Rework our desires, O God. Recreate our will. Like a Poet, come Holy and Life-giving Spirit, open our hearts and rewrite our song, that we might sing for you. *Response*

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**

BENEDICTION

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 promised.
Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!
Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

HYMN LBW#237 "O GOD OF LIGHT"

- 1 O God of light, your word, a lamp unfailing,
shall pierce the darkness of our earthbound way
and show your grace, your plan for us unveiling,
and guide our footsteps to the perfect day.
- 2 From days of old, through blind and willful ages,
though we rebelled, you gently sought again,
and spoke through saints, apostles, prophets,
sages,
who wrote with eager or reluctant pen.

- 3 Undimmed by time, those words are still
revealing
to sinful hearts your justice and your grace;
and questing spirits, longing for your healing,
see your compassion in the Savior's face.
- 4 To all the world your summons you are sending,
through all the earth, to ev'ry land and race,
that myriad tongues, in one great anthem
blending,
may praise and celebrate your gift of grace.

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Leading Worship: Prs. Laura Csellak & Mark Swanson Videographer: Mr. Gary Klinger

