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Worship in the Home: May 24, 2020 (<https://blogs.elca.org/worship/2284/>)

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Worship in the Home

Seventh Sunday of Easter May 24, 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.

The Prayer of the Day may be prayed.

Let us pray.

O God of glory, your Son Jesus Christ suffered for us and ascended to your right hand. Unite us with Christ and each other in suffering and in joy, that all the world may be drawn into your bountiful presence, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Then the readings for this Sunday may be read, as follows:

First Reading: Acts 1:6-14

⁶When the apostles had come together, they asked Jesus, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore dominion to Israel?" ⁷He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by divine authority. ⁸But 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." ⁹When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. ¹⁰While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. ¹¹They said, "You Galileans, why do you stand looking up toward 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."

¹²Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away. ¹³When 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. ¹⁴All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm: *Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35 may be sung or spoken in response to the First Reading.*

¹Let God arise, and let God's ene-¹mies be scattered;
let those who ¹hate God flee.

²As smoke is driven away, so you should drive ¹them away;
as the wax melts before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the pres-¹ence of God.

Follow

³But let the righteous be glad and rejoice¹ before God;
let them also be merry and joyful.
⁴Sing to God, sing praises to God's name; exalt the one who¹ rides the clouds;
I Am is that name, rejoice¹ before God!
⁵In your holy habitation, O God,
you are a father to orphans, defender of widows;
⁶you give the solitary a home and bring forth prisoners¹ into freedom;
but the rebels shall live in¹ desert places.
⁷O God, when you went forth before your people,
when you marched¹ through the wilderness,
⁸the earth quaked, and the skies poured down rain,
at the presence of God, the¹ God of Sinai,
at the presence of God, the¹ God of Israel.
⁹You sent a bountiful¹ rain, O God;
you restored your inheritance¹ when it languished.
¹⁰Your people found their¹ home in it;
in your goodness, O God, you have made provision¹ for the poor.
³²Sing to God, O kingdoms¹ of the earth;
sing praises¹ to the Lord.
³³You ride in the heavens, O God, in the¹ ancient heavens;
you send forth your voice, your¹ mighty voice.
³⁴Ascribe power¹ to God,
whose majesty is over Israel; whose strength is¹ in the skies.
³⁵How wonderful you are in your holy places, O¹ God of Israel,
giving strength and power to your people!¹ Blessed be God!

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Second Reading: 1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11

¹²Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. ¹³But rejoice insofar as you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed. ¹⁴If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory, which is the Spirit of God, is resting on you.

^{5:6}Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that God may exalt you in due time. ⁷Cast all your anxiety on God, because God cares for you. ⁸Discipline yourselves, keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour. ⁹Resist the devil, steadfast in your faith, for you know that your brothers and sisters in all the world are undergoing the same kinds of suffering. ¹⁰And after you have suffered for a little while, that very God of all grace, who has called you into eternal glory in Christ, will restore, support, strengthen, and establish you. ¹¹To God be the power forever and ever. Amen.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel: John 17:1-11

The holy gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹After 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, ²since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. ³And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. ⁴I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. ⁵So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.

⁶"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.

⁷Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; ⁸for 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. ⁹I 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. ¹⁰All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. ¹¹"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 the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Reflection

Follow

Having read these readings, think of this:

Our brothers and sisters in all the world are indeed undergoing suffering now. And, amid that suffering, there are sometimes too many words: complaints; misinformation; self-justifications; accusations. But Jesus Christ has given us the very words of God. And those words will restore, support, strengthen and establish us. They give us life. They will make us one with God and so with all of God's people. Usually, outside of this time of pandemic, the church hears those words of God in the words of forgiveness at the font, in the scriptures read and preached in the assembly, and in the very body and blood of Christ given to us together to eat and drink. But this is not a usual time. Out of care for our neighbors and our world, out of concrete love, we stay apart. Yet, amazingly, the very words of God are still given to us: we read and sing them in our homes, like those early Christians devoted to prayer in that Jerusalem house. Our own homes can become a place of the word of God. Our regular meals can be a place of unity in the presence of Christ, as we wait to return to the fuller unity of the Sunday assembly in the church. Here are three of the words we have now: "Resist the roaring lion" who wants to devour you with anger and fear. And "cast all your anxiety on God, for God cares for you." And "love one another as I have loved you."

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Concrete love, we stay apart.

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If you have a hymnal (or using the graphic below), you might now sing or read "Son of God, Eternal Savior" (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 655) or "Day by Day." (ELW 790)

Son of God, Eternal Savior (<https://blogs.elca.org/worship/files/2020/05/Son-of-God-Eternal-Savior.pdf>)

Day by Day (<https://blogs.elca.org/worship/files/2020/05/Day-by-Day.pdf>)

Then pray together these prayers for our church and world:

On this seventh Sunday of Easter, we gather in our homes and yet together as one, praying for the church, the world, and all who are in need. Our response to each petition is, "Your mercy is great."

A brief silence.

In this time of troubling separation, we pray to you, triune God, for the unity of your churches. Bind us together in the truth of your gospel. Make us witnesses of your mysterious might. As you blessed the early disciples for their unfolding ministry, bless those who lead and serve our local congregation.

A brief silence.

God of unity, hear us:

Your mercy is great.

Nurture the life of your creation. Support those who explore the mysteries of your universe. We praise you for Nicholas Copernicus, whom we commemorate today, and for all the scientists who have enriched our understanding of creation. Help all online teachers to instruct our children in the ways of nature.

A brief silence.

God of unity, hear us:

Your mercy is great.

As we prepare for Memorial Day, we pray for peace around the world. Protect all soldiers, and assure them of your never-failing strength. Shield the vulnerable who live in paths of violence. We pray especially for the people of Afghanistan and Syria.

A brief silence.

God of unity, hear us:

Your mercy is great.

Come to the aid of all who suffer. We pray for those who are laden with grief, overwhelmed by anxiety, or struggling without medical care. Uphold all health-care workers who attend to coronavirus patients. Comfort all families and friends who cannot embrace their loved ones at the time of death. We give into your care all the sick, especially those we name here before you (*especially*).

A brief silence.

God of unity, hear us:

Your mercy is great.

Again we pray: give the world a vaccine.

A brief silence.

God of unity, hear us:

Your mercy is great.

Grant your oneness to humankind, so marked by isolation and division. Bring harmony to families, rival gangs, distraught citizens, racial groupings, and members of our legislatures. Give to each individual a wholeness that is birthed in you. Make us one, as you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are one.

A brief silence.

Follow

God of unity, hear us:

Your mercy is great.

Make us steadfast in the faith, and graciously receive our personal petitions:

A longer time of silence.

God of unity, hear us:

Your mercy is great.

To know you is to have eternal life. We praise you for the lives of all who have died in the faith and who now live in you (*especially*). At the end, bring us with all your saints into your presence.

A brief silence.

God of unity, hear us:

Your mercy is great.

With bold confidence in your love, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, God of our past, our present, and our future, we place all for whom we pray into your circle of love, now and forever.

Amen.

If you have a hymnal (or using the graphic below), you might now sing or read "In Christ There Is No East or West" (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 650) or "Blest Be the Tie that Binds." (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 656)

In Christ There Is No East or West (<https://blogs.elca.org/worship/files/2020/05/In-Christ-There-Is-No-East-or-West.pdf>)

Blest Be the Tie That Binds (<https://blogs.elca.org/worship/files/2020/05/Blest-Be-the-Tie-That-Binds.pdf>)

Then conclude with these prayers:

Let us pray.

A brief silence is kept before the 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.

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.

The God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing, so that we may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The God of all grace ☩ bless us now and forever.

Amen.

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

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