

Sunday, March 22, 2020

4th Sunday in Lent and

1st Sunday in the Covid 19 Lockdown

Gathering the Community

Please spend a moment in preparation for worship.

Become quiet. Notice your breath.

*Give thanks for your breath: You, breathing in God's world,
God breathing in you and through you.*

Welcome & Introduction to community the Service

These are strange times! Who would have thought even 2 weeks ago that we would be gathering like this! But every challenge is full of potential for good. Friends, I wrote this service for you so that we would be united in Spirit this Sunday. "God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth." says Jesus in John 4:24. Buildings are beautiful, gatherings in person are so important, but when that cant happen, we can still worship together, in Spirit.

Lighting of the Christ Candle

You may light a candle or tealight in your home.

We light this light in the name of Creator who said

"Let there be light" -and there was light.

We light this light in the name of Christ, who said:

"I am the light of the world, whoever walks in my footsteps will not be in darkness". We light this light in the name of Holy Spirit, who is our inner light and the light of God's presence in the world. Be still for a moment and become aware of God's light within you, your home, our community, and all around the globe.

A moment of Silence

If you wish you can play a piece of music here, or listen to the sounds of nature. Can you hear bird song?

Call to Worship/Opening Prayer

(Iona community Morning prayer)

May the purpose of God be between us and each intention. **The hand of God between us and each hand.** The pain of Christ between us and each pain. **The Love of Christ between us and each Love.** O God who brought us to the bright light of this new day, **bring us to the guiding light of eternity.**

Hearing the Story



The Psalm for this week is : Psalm 34 :11-14

Advice for those trying to be faithful

11 Gather around, children, listen to what I'm saying;

I will teach you how to revere the Eternal.

12 If you love life

and want to live a good, long time,

13 Take care with the things you say.

Don't lie or spread gossip or talk about improper things.

14 Walk away from the evil things of the world, and always seek peace and pursue it.

The Voice Translation, 2012

Or: In the New King James Version, 1982

11 Come, you children, listen to me;

I will teach you the fear of the Lord.

12 Who is the man *who* desires life,

And loves many days, that he may see good?

13 Keep your tongue from evil,
And your lips from speaking deceit.
14 Depart from evil and do good;
Seek peace and pursue it.

This is the witness of Israel

Thanks be to God for the Word.

Time with the young and young at heart:

"The Triple Test Wisdom story"

In ancient Greece, Socrates (the famous philosopher) was visited by an acquaintance of his. Eager to share some juicy gossip, the man asked if Socrates would like to know the story he'd just heard about a friend of theirs. Socrates replied that before the man spoke, he needed to pass the "Triple-Filter" test. The first filter, he explained, is Truth. *"Have you made absolutely sure that what you are about to say is true?"* The man shook his head. *"No, I actually just heard about it, and ..."*

Socrates cut him off. *"You don't know for certain that it is true, then. Is what you want to say something good or kind?"* Again, the man shook his head. *"No! Actually, just the opposite. You see ..."*

Socrates lifted his hand to stop the man speaking. *"So you are not certain that what you want to say is true, and it isn't good or kind. One filter still remains, though, so you may yet still tell me. That is Usefulness or Necessity. Is this information useful or necessary to me?"* A little defeated, the man replied, *"No, not really."*

"Well, then," Socrates said, turning on his heel. *"If what you want to say is neither true, nor good or kind, nor useful or necessary, please don't say anything at all."*

Source | Jennifer Cook O'Toole, *The Asperkid's (Secret) Book of Social Rules* (Jessica Kingsley Publications, 2012) page 137

Ask yourself: How might this "triple test" be helpful these days? If these 3 ancient test questions dont appeal to you, how do you keep yourself from "spreading gossip?"

Reading the Gospel: **Mark 10:32-45**

(see next page)

A Third Time Jesus Foretells His Death and Resurrection

32 They were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them; they were amazed, and those who followed were afraid. He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them what was to happen to him, 33 saying, “See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death; then they will hand him over to the Gentiles; 34 they will mock him, and spit upon him, and flog him, and kill him; and after three days he will rise again.”

The Request of James and John

35 James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to him and said to him, “Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.” 36 And he said to them, “What is it you want me to do for you?” 37 And they said to him, “Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory.” 38 But Jesus said to them, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?” 39 They replied, “We are able.” Then Jesus said to them, “The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; 40 but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared.”

41 When the ten heard this, they began to be angry with James and John. 42 So Jesus called them and said to them, “You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them,

and their great ones are tyrants over them. 43 But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, 44 and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. 45 For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.” Translation: New Revised Standard (NRSV)

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the church
Thanks be to God.

This Sunday’s pointers for your own reflection:
- Jesus is making his way toward Jerusalem, a place that everyone knows will make it difficult for him. Jesus even goes further, announcing his death and resurrection. His followers are afraid-for him-for themselves? The word “afraid” rings true this week for most of us. We are concerned about what lies ahead.

Would it help you to accept these difficult times as your own “calvary?” Not insinuating that you will be facing literal death, but we all face the loss of habits we have become attached to. Some of us face financial losses that are considerable.

Take a moment to be in touch with your worst fears.

Jesus then speaks of resurrection: We too may cultivate the hope for new life in order to face the difficulties and fear of the present.

What gives you courage today? What image of resurrection after the Covid 19 threat is past do you have? Is it just “going back to normal?” or is it a vision of a renewed and better way of living? What might God have to teach us through this crisis?

When you are finished with your reflection sit for a moment quietly or listen to some music of your choice. Then...

Read verses 35-45 again.

If you have a hymn book, you may want to sing the words to the servant song

They are based on the second part of the gospel. Important words in this time where we all must give and accept help.

Will you let me be your servant
Let me be as Christ to you
Pray that I might have the grace
To let you be my servant too
We are pilgrims on the journey

We are travellers on the road
We are here to help each other
Walk the mile and bear the load

I will hold the Christ light for you
In the night time of your fear
I will hold my hand out to you
Speak the the peace you long to hear.

I will weep when you are weeping
When you laugh, I'll laugh with you
I will share your joy and sorrow
Till we've seen this journey through

Will you let me be your servant
Let me be as Christ to you
Pray that I might have the grace
To let you be my servant too

Song by Marty Haugen and David Haas

Responding to the Word

Offering our Gifts

Your financial gifts via PAR or regular mail are much appreciated and needed now as the bills keep coming in, but so are your time and talent!

Thank you.

Prayers of the people

Holy One, during Jesus' ministry on earth You showed Your power and caring by healing people of all ages and stations of life from physical, mental, and spiritual ailments. Be present now to people who need Your loving touch because of COVID-19. May they feel Your power of healing through the care of doctors and nurses.

We lift to You our concern for people who are more likely than others to become severely ill from COVID-19 — the elderly and people with chronic health conditions....*(insert names)* Protect them from harm and be their comfort in this time of uncertainty.

Take away the fear, anxiety, and feelings of isolation from people who self isolate or are in quarantine. Give them a sense of purpose in pursuing health and protecting others from exposure to the disease. Bring peace to all who suffer from anxiety.

We pray for our local leaders in healthcare and community organizations *(insert names...)* and for our elected officials here that their decisions may be guided by wisdom and compassion.... *(insert further prayers as you wish and close with the*

_ Lord's Prayer

Preparing for Service during the week

Announcements & Notices (see separate letters)

Blessing: *(adapted from Iona prayers)*

Now may the Spirit of God, who brooded over the waters and brought order out of chaos, find a home in our hearts. May God settle our minds as we rest at home, and inspire our minds as we walk outside and breathe fresh air. From where we are, to where You need us, lead us on, dear Lord.

*** Commissioning and Sung Blessing: [More Voices # 218]**

May the love of the Lord rest upon your soul.
May God's love dwell in you, throughout every day.
May God's countenance shine upon you and be gracious to you.
May God's Spirit be upon you as you leave this place.

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**Rev. Elisabeth may not be in the office
-but she is here for you!!**

The minister is available by phone call or email, independent of particular hours. We can also arrange one on one meetings, or small group meetings. Please be in touch



**Welcome!
St. George & St. Andrew
United Church Annapolis Royal**



*Open Doors (not so much right now...)
Open hearts (you bet!)
Open minds (we're trying...)*

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