

FIFTH SUNDAY of EASTER WORSHIP

May 10, 2020

**Cross of Glory Lutheran Church
Brooklyn Center, MN**

PRELUDE "I Will Sing New Songs of Gladness" by Anton Dvorak *Keith Williams*

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, full of compassion and mercy, abounding in steadfast love.

Amen.

Trusting God's promise of forgiveness, let us confess our sin against God and one another.

(silence for reflection and self-examination)

Eternal God our creator;

in you we live and move and have our being. Look upon us, your people, the work of your hands. Forgive us all our offenses, and cleanse us from proud thoughts and empty desires. By your grace draw us near to you, our refuge and our strength: through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit given to us. In the mercy of almighty God, Christ died for us while we still were sinners; and for his sake, God forgives you all your sins. **Amen**

GATHERING HYMN

He Lives

Worship Team

See the tomb where He laid
See the stone rolled away
He is risen He is risen He's alive
See His hands see His feet
Touch His scars and believe
He is risen He is risen He's alive
Oh He's alive

He lives
All honor and power are His
All glory forever amen
Jesus (lives)
(Jesus lives)

Hear the shackles breaking free
Hear the song of the redeemed
He is moving He is moving He's alive
So take this freedom take this love
Can you feel it rising up
He is here He is here He's alive

You took all our shame
Left it in the grave
We're forgiven we're forgiven
The work forever done
Only by the blood
It is finished it is finished

He is risen He is risen He's alive

GREETING

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.

SONGS OF PRAISE

Living Hope

How great the chasm that lay between us
How high the mountain I could not climb
In desperation I turned to heaven
And spoke Your name into the night
Then through the darkness Your loving-kindness
Tore through the shadows of my soul
The work is finished the end is written
Jesus Christ my living hope

Hallelujah praise the One who set me free
Hallelujah death has lost its grip on me
You have broken every chain
There's salvation in Your name
Jesus Christ my living hope

Jesus Christ my living hope
Oh God You are my living hope

Worship Team

Who could imagine so great a mercy
What heart could fathom such boundless grace
The God of ages stepped down from glory
To wear my sin and bear my shame
The cross has spoken I am forgiven
The King of kings calls me His own
Beautiful Savior I'm Yours forever
Jesus Christ my living hope

Then came the morning that sealed the promise
Your buried body began to breathe
Out of the silence the Roaring Lion
Declared the grave has no claim on me
(REPEAT)
Jesus Yours is the victory

Worthy is the Lamb

Thank You for the cross Lord
Thank You for the price You paid
Bearing all my sin and shame
In love You came and gave amazing grace

Worthy is the Lamb seated on the throne
Crown You now with many crowns
You reign victorious
High and lifted up Jesus Son of God
The Darling of heaven crucified
Worthy is the Lamb
Worthy is the Lamb

Worship Team

Thank You for this love Lord
Thank You for the nail-pierced hands
Washed me in Your cleansing flow
Now all I know Your forgiveness and embrace

Worthy is the Lamb
Worthy is the Lamb
The Darling of heaven crucified

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, your Son Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. Give us grace to love one another, to follow in the way of his commandments, and to share his risen life with all the world, for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

PSALM 31:1-5, 15-16

¹In you, O LORD, have taken refuge; let me never be put to shame;
deliver me in your righteousness.

²**Incline your ear to me;
make haste to deliver me.**

³Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe, for you are my crag and my stronghold;
for the sake of your name, lead me and guide me.

⁴**Take me out of the net that they have secretly set for me,
for you are my tower of strength.**

⁵Into your hands I commend my spirit,
for you have redeemed me, O LORD, God of truth.

¹⁵**My times are in your hand;
rescue me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who persecute me.**

¹⁶Let your face shine upon your servant;
save me in your steadfast love.”

SPECIAL MUSIC

"Prayer" by Ludwig van Beethoven

Keith Williams

GOSPEL John 14:1-14

The holy gospel according to St. John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. ²In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. ⁴And you know the way to the place where I am going.” ⁵Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” ⁶Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”

⁸Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.” ⁹Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? ¹⁰Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. ¹¹Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. ¹²Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

“Hope for a Troubled Heart”

John 14:1-14

People of God, grace and peace to you in the name of the risen Christ. Amen.

This is the seventh week now that I am sharing a sermon while looking out at a sea of empty church pews. As I give my sermon during this time, I try to imagine several of you sitting in your “usual” spots in the sanctuary. Yes, by now I can pretty much guess the general area where you sit on Sunday morning! This helps a bit, but I know that we are all looking forward to that day when the congregation can gather together in weekly worship again. Until this time, please know that you are remembered in prayer. Thankfully, the Spirit of God doesn’t need to practice social distancing but continues even now to be actively moving to bring us the assurance of God’s presence and the strength to carry on as people of faith.

Our gospel for today almost seems to be written for our present situation as we deal with the Covid-19 virus. Jesus begins with the words, “Let not your heart be troubled.” It is Thursday evening, the night before Jesus’ crucifixion. Jesus has just shared with the disciples that not only is he going to die but also one of them will betray him and Peter will deny him three times. It is in this context that Jesus says, “Let not your heart be troubled.” “What?” the disciples must have asked. “Do not let our hearts be troubled? Are you kidding us?” Because of all that was happening, the disciples’ hearts were troubled. They were afraid. They didn’t know how to go on, where to go, and how to do it.

We get it, don't we? At this time, each of us is most likely troubled too. How can we not be? In our present situation, there most likely are a number of things that you and I can find troubling. So, how would you answer someone who asked you, "What troubles your heart the most these days?"

The disciples' hearts were troubled, very troubled. And so, they ask questions. Thomas and Philip ask questions about what Jesus is saying: "Where are you going?" and "Can we see the Father?" Behind both of these questions, I suspect, is another, more primal question: "Why? Why are you leaving? Why is this happening?"

Have you ever noticed that? That when we are struggling to make sense of things or feel overwhelmed by circumstances, we often turn to questions. Why is this happening? Where is God in all of this? How did this happen? Why, God? Why?

How does Jesus respond to the disciples' questions? In response, Jesus offers them not so much answers as he offers himself. My friend, the question of "why" is an important question. It gives voice to our deep need to understand, to comprehend, to make sense. We need to be assured that as people of faith it is good for us to ask our questions. But we also need to acknowledge that often times it is quite difficult, if not impossible, to answer why. Instead Jesus answers the question of "who". "Who" is the one who loved them? "Who" makes demonstrably clear God's love. Who is the one whom they can trust to provide all that they need to be able to keep their hearts at peace? Sometimes, when we want answers, what we really need most is relationship! Questions of "why" are not always helpful. What we really need most of all is the "who." We need to know that Jesus' presence stills our hearts. Jesus can lead us to God. Jesus, as "Love incarnate" shows us the love that will inevitably show us God.

This God is present to us always through the love of Christ. Whatever our questions, whatever our doubts, whatever the unknowns (and during this time we have a number of these), Jesus makes himself available to us. Indeed, Jesus offers himself to us, inviting us into a relationship that may not answer all of our "why's" but ultimately brings to us the "who" that can transcend all questions.

And what does God's presence with us do? Consider Peter Arnett, the one-time commentator and reporter who shares of a time when he was in Israel, in a small town on the West Bank. An explosion went off. Everywhere he looked there were signs of death and destruction. A man came running up to him holding a bloodied little girl in his arms. The man pleaded with Arnett and said, "Mister, I can't get her to a hospital. The Israeli troops have sealed off the area. No one can get in or out, but you're press. You can get through. Please, mister! Help me get her to a hospital. Please! If you don't help me, she's going to die."

Peter put the man and the wounded girl in his car, got through the sealed area, and rushed to the hospital in Jerusalem. The whole time he was hurtling down the road, the man was pleading from the backseat, calling out to him, "Can you go faster, mister? Can you go faster? I'm losing her... I'm losing her!"

When they finally got to the hospital, the girl was rushed to the operating room. The two exhausted men retreated to the waiting area and sat silently on a bench. After a short while, the doctor came out of the operating room and said to them solemnly, "She's died."

The man collapsed in tears, and as Peter put his arms around him to comfort him, he said, "I don't know what to say. I can't imagine what you must be going through I've never lost a child." The man looked at Peter in a startled manner and said, "Oh, mister! That Palestinian girl was not my daughter. I'm an Israeli settler. That Palestinian is not my child. But, mister... There comes a time when each of us must realize that every child, regardless of that child's background, is a daughter or a son. There must come a time when we realize that we are all family.

What does God in Christ's presence with us do? It turns enemies into family. It breaks down walls and barriers that divide people. It helps all of us see that in spite of our differences, we truly are all family!

God never left the disciples or anyone alone. As God does not leave us alone in these uncertain times.

The truth is, we are all family. There are no divisions when Jesus comes to show the way to God. There is no division when Jesus stills our hearts. We ARE ALL FAMILY. Christ's presence is made real to us through others - especially family!

A world-wide crisis can broaden our concept of family, as it is doing today. But will we remember this when this crisis is over? I pray that we do. I pray that we do.

God's word to us today is: "Don't let your hearts be troubled." God's love is present. Thanks be to God.

HYMN #715 Christ Be Our Light

1 Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
light for the world to see.

Refrain

verses 1, 2 and 5

Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.

2 Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has pow'r to save us.
Make us your living voice. *Refrain*

5

Many the gifts, many the people,
many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
signs of your kingdom come. *Refrain*

CONFESSION OF FAITH 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.**

OFFERTORY RESPONSE #186 Create In Me a Clean Heart

Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and uphold me with your free Spirit.

OFFERING PRAYER

God of life,

Your give us these gifts of earth, these resources of our life and our labor. Take them, offered in great thanksgiving, and use them to set a table that will heal the whole creation; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and light. Amen

PRAYERS of the PEOPLE

Freed by God in Christ to live and love and serve, we pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's beloved creation.

(silence)

Generous God, we thank you for all the blessings of this life. Give us such an awareness of your love and your mercies that with truly thankful hearts we may show forth your praise, not only with our lips, but also in our lives. We are especially thankful today for all mothers. Thank you, O God, for the grace, mercy, and kindness that you have shown us through them. Lord in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Lord Jesus Christ, come to our aid now, in the midst of the global spread of the coronavirus, that we may experience your healing love. Heal those who are sick with the virus. May they regain their strength and health through quality medical care. Heal us from our fear, which prevents nations from working together and neighbors from helping each other. Heal us from our pride, which can make us claim invulnerability to a disease that knows no borders. Jesus Christ, healer of all, stay by our side in this time of uncertainty and sorrow. Lord in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Loving God, we pray for our congregation, Cross of Glory Lutheran Church. Be especially with those who are experiencing sickness, loneliness, financial strife, job loss or any difficulty during this time. Surround us with the promise of your presence and thank you for the gift we have in our community of faith - our church family. Lord in your mercy...

Hear our prayer.

Almighty God, we thank you that Pastor Ali Tranvik has accepted the call to become the next pastor at Cross of Glory. We look forward to our journey together. Be with Pastor Ali and Isaac in this time of transition. May they be surrounded by your strength and guidance. Lord in your mercy...

Hear our prayer.

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

LORD'S PRAYER Lord remember us in your kingdom and teach us always to prayer.
Our father, who art in heaven

BENEDICTION

May God who has brought us from death to life fill you with great joy in believing. And may almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING FORTH SONG #619 I Know that My Redeemer Lives! verses 1, 2 and 4

1 I know that my Redeemer lives!
What comfort this sweet sentence gives!
He lives, he lives, who once was dead;
he lives, my ever-living head!

2 He lives triumphant from the grave;
he lives eternally to save;
he lives exalted, throned above;
he lives to rule his church in love.

4 He lives to silence all my fears;
he lives to wipe away my tears;
he lives to calm my troubled heart;
he lives all blessings to impart.

DISMISSAL

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!

Thanks be to God. Alleluia!