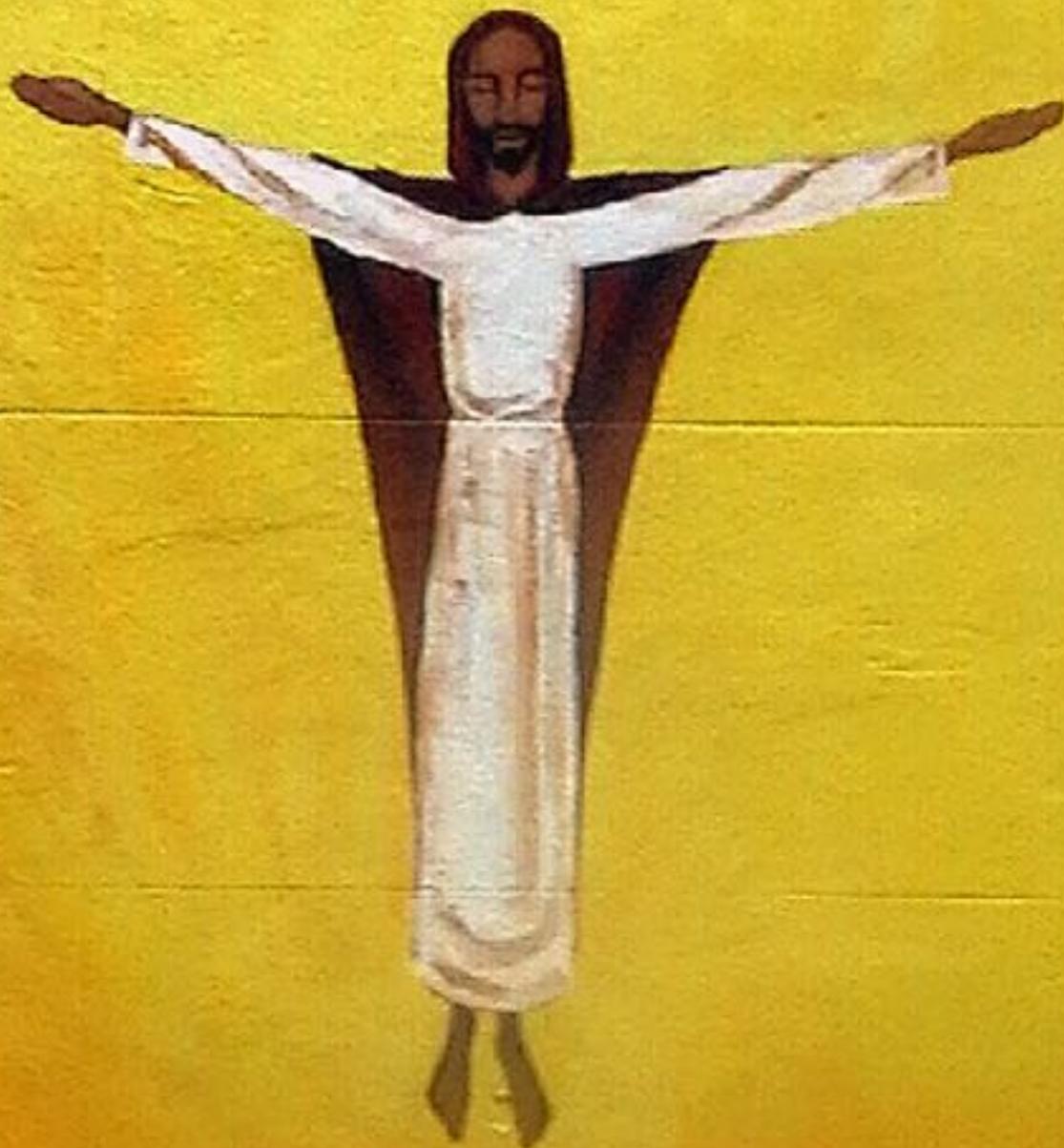


Unsettled But Unafraid:
A Liturgy for Worshipping at Home
April 19, 2020



Although we are not able to gather in-person for worship, we are able to gather in spirit. This simple resource is designed to help us worship together around a common liturgy and theme during this time of disruption from our normal routines and places. Use this liturgy on its own or as a companion to video devotion. Use it individually or as a family. If you are using it in a family setting, consider giving each person one part to "lead". Take some time to consider the reflection questions. If using individually, try to carve out 10-minutes to quietly read, reflect, and pray through. No matter how your worship, God will show up. Liturgy this week was compiled by Rev. Annie Franklin Arvin.

Opening Prayer

Resurrected Lord,
Widen our hearts to feel your spirit working in us.
Perk our ears to hear your word.
Open our eyes to see your vision. Amen.

Psalm 16

Keep me safe, my God,
for in you I take refuge.
**I say to the Lord, "You are my Lord;
apart from you I have no good thing."**
I say of the holy people who are in the land,
"They are the noble ones in whom is all my delight."
Those who run after other gods will suffer more and more.
I will not pour out libations of blood to such gods
or take up their names on my lips.
**Lord, you alone are my portion and my cup;
you make my lot secure.**
**The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places;
surely I have a delightful inheritance.**
I will praise the Lord, who counsels me;
even at night my heart instructs me.
I keep my eyes always on the Lord.
With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken.
Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices;
my body also will rest secure,
**because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead,
nor will you let your faithful one see decay.**
You make known to me the path of life;
you will fill me with joy in your presence,
with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

Scripture-Acts 1:1-11 (included in video)

If you're using this liturgy in conjunction with the worship video, start the video now as we share in a time of scripture, preaching, praying the prayers of the people, and benediction.

In my former book, *Theophilus*, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

Then they gathered around him and asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"

He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

Questions for Reflection:

- What must it have been like for the disciples to be with Jesus again following his resurrection? To eat with him again?
- How do you think the disciples felt when Jesus told them to wait in Jerusalem?
- What is the vision Jesus is casting for the disciples in this story? What is the vision God is casting for you?
- In today's homily, we learn about the "fearless and sacrificial" response of Christians to an epidemic in the 5th century — an example of having faithful vision. What are some ways we as disciples today can similarly serve? Could choosing calm over panic or adhering to the advice of medical experts in order to help protect those who are most vulnerable be considered sacrificial? What are some other examples can you think?

Prayers of the People (included in video)

After each petition, you'll see the phrase "God of grace, hear our prayer." At this point, you are invited to pause and offer your own prayers to God.

God of grace, you are always present. You never leave us and you have never left your people. In the days after you were risen as you ate with your disciples once more and

promised the Holy Spirit would come. As we discern your vision for your world and your people, we trust in your presence.

Lead your Church in every place as we seek to worship you, to serve you faithfully and safely. God of grace, **hear our prayer...**

Guide leaders in every land with your divine wisdom to act swiftly in the interest of safety for your people rather than in the interest of money. God of grace, **hear our prayer...**

Bring about a time of justice in your world where there is enough for all: enough food, enough water, enough shelter, enough healthcare. God of grace, **hear our prayer....**

Renew your creation and reveal to us once more your glory in the beauty of what you've made. God of grace, **hear our prayer...**

Fill those who are hungry, thirsty, and who have lost their sense of stability with good things. Bring your people into a land of abundance when scarcity is all we know. God of grace, **hear our prayer...**

Care tenderly for those who are ill, close to death and grieving. Remind them of that they are connected to you. God of grace, **hear our prayer...**

Support those who care for others. Give them strength to continue to do your work caring for your creation. God of grace, **hear our prayer...**

We give these prayers to you trusting in your love for you people as we say the prayer Jesus Christ taught us praying:

*Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed by 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 debts as we forgive our debtors;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. **Amen.***

Easter People

A Reflection By Suzanne Morrison, Bell Choir Director

We are now in the season of Eastertide. During Lent we journeyed to Jerusalem from our separate paths. We had hoped to be journeying towards Pentecost together, but we will have to do that in different ways too. Like many, it has taken me some time to get my bearings in this journey. I am reminded of a song that Mr. Victor, my children's choir director, gave us to sing:

Ev'ry morning is Easter morning from now on!
Ev'ry day's resurrection day – the past is over and gone!
Good-bye guilt, good-bye fear, Good riddance!
Hello Lord, hello sun!
I am one of the Easter people—my new life has begun!
Daily news is so bad, it seems the Good News seldom gets heard!
Get it straight from the Easter people— God's in charge spread the word!
Ev'ry morning is Easter morning from now on!
Ev'ry day's resurrection day – the past is over and gone!
Ev'ry morning is Easter morning from now on!

These joyful words are not denying that fact that there is trouble and anxiety surrounding us. Instead, they are reminding us that God is always with us. Jesus is stubbornly with us even when we do not remember that He is there. I see that stubbornness in people figuring out ways to move forward with joy. In my neighborhood, someone provided a stencil that was used to create beautiful stained-glass chalk crosses at the end of many driveways. People are leaving gifts of toilet paper and disinfectant on doorsteps. Birthdays and anniversaries are being celebrated by dressing up, having a nice meal, and connecting with family and friends in a new way. Graduating seniors are being celebrated in online bios and newsletters. Programs that help the hungry are delivering directly to recipients and making new friends along the way. Planning for Summer programs continues with creativity.

I think this moment in time is allowing us to find new rhythms and discover new capabilities. Many have learned new skills in cooking, sewing, gardening, computers, photography, even microbiology. We are thankful for our essential workers who continue to work in environments that are not as safe as they used to be. They and we are not paralyzed by fear, but stubbornly move forward. We are the Easter People!