

Unsettled but Unafraid: A Liturgy for Worshipping at Home Week of May 3, 2020 (Fourth Sunday of Easter) St. Simons Presbyterian Church

Although we are not able to gather in-person for worship, we are able to gather in spirit. This week's liturgy is designed to be used alongside the worship video, although it can be used on its own. Use it individually or as a family. If you are using it in a family setting, consider giving each person one part to "lead". If using individually, try to carve out 10-minutes to quietly read, reflect, and pray through.

This week as a church we celebrate communion. Before you begin worship, take a moment to gather something that serve bread (whether a loaf of bread, a roll, cookie, breakfast pastry, pop-tart) as well as something that can serve as the cup (milk, juice, water, wine). And together let us remember that no matter how you worship, God always shows up. **Liturgy this week was compiled by Rev. Annie Franklin Arvin.**



Opening Psalm - Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;
he restores my soul.
He leads me in right paths
for his name's sake.
Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I fear no evil;
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff—
they comfort me.
You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord
my whole life long.

Confession of Sin *(included in video)*

As members of Christ's body, we confess the reality of sin and brokenness in personal and common life. Trusting in God's abundant grace, we approach God with confidence confessing together the sinful state of the world and our lives. Although today we may pray this prayer alone or only with our families, we pray this prayer together with our church in Spirit.

Gracious God,
We have gone astray.
You call us to follow,
and we hear your voice.
Yet, we choose to heed other voices—
voices that promise status and comfort and a carefree life.
Call to us again.
Summon us onto right paths
to pursue justice in your name,
to seek after the well-being of all.
Lead us to the table you prepare for us—
where rivals share both bread and blessings and discover there is enough for all.

Silent confession

In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. AMEN.

Assurance of Pardon *(included in video)*

Friends, hear and read the Good News. Jesus Christ came into the world for us. Jesus ate with sinners for us. Jesus died on a cross for us. And he rose again for the forgiveness of sin-our sin. Rejoice! We are a forgiven people! Amen.

Scripture - Acts 2:42-47 *(included in video)*

The believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, to the community, to their shared meals, and to their prayers. A sense of awe came over everyone. God performed many wonders and signs through the apostles. All the believers were united and shared everything. They would sell pieces of property and possessions and distribute the proceeds to everyone who needed them. Every day, they met together in the temple and ate in their homes. They shared food with gladness and simplicity. They praised God and demonstrated God's goodness to everyone. The Lord added daily to the community those who were being saved.

Reflection Questions

- What word or words would you use to describe the general mood of the scene described in Acts 2:42-47?
- The passage reads that "awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles." Think back on the last week. Is there a moment(s) that caused you to be in awe?
- In the homily, Alan suggests that perhaps there is a link between the early Christians generosity with one another and the joy (i.e., "glad hearts") that they seem to live with.

What are some times when you have experienced joy through generosity? How have those experiences informed, challenged, or deepened your faith in Jesus Christ?

- Watch the “Eating Twinkies with God” video. What parallels – if any – do you see in that story and the story we read from Acts today? Is there an experience in your own life when you have glimpsed the face of God in another simply through sharing what you have?

Communion *(included in video)*

I. Invitation to the Table

As we find ourselves this day sitting around our own tables perhaps in the dining room, or at the coffee table, or even the table on the porch, know the table you worship near this morning is God’s table and ALL are welcome at God’s table.

II. Prayer of Thanksgiving

God abundant grace,
Out of nothing you created this world good.
You the world in your image and you made a covenant with your people.
When your people broke the covenant, you didn’t leave us alone.
Instead, you sent prophets calling us back to you.

In your own time, you shared yourself with the world in Jesus Christ.
Jesus walked among us teaching us ways of love and generosity that stretched our imaginations.
He gave his life for the forgiveness of sins and was raised from the dead leaving the tomb empty.

Risen Lord, pour out your Spirit upon these elements of bread and cup.
May they unite us with you and believers in every time and place
proclaiming the new life we find in Christ. Amen.

III. Words of Institution

On the night of his arrest
Jesus was at a table with his disciples.
He took bread, blessed and broke it,
and gave it to them, saying: Take, eat.
This is my body, given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way he took and poured the cup,
saying: Take, drink.
This is the new covenant sealed in my blood,
shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this in remembrance of me.

Now, whenever we eat and drink at this table,
we proclaim Christ’s death and resurrection until he comes again.
And Come again he will. Amen.

The meal has been blessed. Friends, take and eat.
This is Christ's body broken for you and the blood of Christ shed for you. Amen.

IV. Prayer After Communion and Prayers of the People

God of wonder,
Somehow in ordinary elements,
you renew us at your table.
May this food strengthen us in love
and help us to serve you in each other.

As we give thanks for this meal,
we trust in your presence in the world
and so we offer to you these prayers:

For those who are lonely, be a companion.
For those working past their limit, be strength to both continue on and to say
"stop."
For those overwhelmed, be rest.
For those wondering where their next meal is coming from, be bread.
For those drowning in fear, be fresh air and still water.
For those grieving alone, be comfort.
For those anxious, be peace.

We trust in your presence as we pray the prayer Jesus Christ taught us:

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.

A Prayer for the Week:

Generous God, thank you for the gift of this new day. Help me to watch for
your signs and wonders in the world today, and fill my heart with gladness and
generosity, that I may generate good will wherever I go. Amen.