



Milton Lutheran Parish

Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church – 1125 Mahoning Street, Milton, PA 17847 – 570-742-7473

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Deacon Gary Schaeffer, Interim Pastor

Dear Friends of the Milton Lutheran Parish:

I hope you are doing well, staying safe, and finding ways to be connected with family and friends. It's been a long time since we our lives changed. As I write this letter I'm reminded how the first letter I sent was written 10 weeks ago. That's a long time.

I know we are all waiting for life to go back to some semblance of normalcy. Although, I'm not so sure that things will look quite like what they did before. The reality is that our lives will be very different once we are able to emerge from this pandemic. That reality reminds me of just how important it is to put our faith and trust in God.

In our Gospel reading for this week, Jesus ascends to heaven after his death and resurrection. In Luke he tells his disciples to go to Jerusalem and wait for him. I have to imagine that it was not an easy wait. They after all died themselves before they were able to see Jesus again. And yet, he calls them to be witnesses to the things Jesus did. He also tells them about the gift of the Holy Spirit living among them.

Yes, waiting for something to change is not easy. Yes, we would all like our circumstances to be different. Please know that in your waiting God is with you and through the presence of the Holy Spirit you have been given God's grace in your life and in the lives of others.

Included with this mailing are copies of two devotionals along with a copy of the worship bulletin for this upcoming Sunday. I hope each of them are a blessing to you as we all are trying to stay connected with God and one another. Our worship services and bible studies remain online and you can access them through the parish website or either church Facebook page.

Our Parish Council has assembled a team of people from both church's that will be meeting to discuss opportunities for in-person gatherings that will give us the chance to see each other in person. It will take a lot of deliberate conversation to plan and find a way for us to gather in person that is safe and uplifting for us. So, I ask that you keep them in your prayers as they gather. Our hope is to have a plan for in-person gatherings beginning sometime at the end of June.

Thank you to everyone that have been able to send your offering to the Parish. As you know, we rely on your giving to sustain the ministry of the Milton Lutheran Parish. If the circumstances of this pandemic have prevented you from being able to give, please know you are in our thoughts and prayers.

As always if you have any questions, concerns, or needs please contact me directly at schaeffer0319@gmail.com or (845) 636-0194.

Blessings,

Gary

Sunday, May 24, 2020, Worship Bulletin
Seventh Sunday of Easter
Milton Lutheran Parish- Milton, PA



Welcome and Announcements

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, your only Son was taken into the heavens and in your presence intercedes for us. Receive us and our prayers for all the world, and in the end bring everything into your glory, through Jesus Christ, our Sovereign and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Opening Hymn- *In Christ There Is No East or West*

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God,
who forgives all our sin,
whose mercy endures forever.

Amen.

Confession of Sin and Forgiveness

P- God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

P- Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

P- Gracious God,

C- have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of ✚ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

Amen.

First Reading: Acts 1:1-11

Before he is lifted into heaven, Jesus promises that the missionary work of the disciples will spread out from Jerusalem to all the world. His words provide an outline of the book of Acts.

[Luke writes:] ¹In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning ²until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. ³After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. ⁴While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. "This," he said, "is what you have heard from me; ⁵for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

⁶So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?" ⁷He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own 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, "Men of Galilee, 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."

Psalm: Psalm 47

God has gone up with a shout. (Ps. 47:5)

¹Clap your hands, | all you peoples;
shout to God with a | joyful sound.

²**For the LORD Most High is | to be feared:
a great king over | all the earth,**

³who subdues the | peoples under us,
and the nations un- | der our feet;

⁴**who chooses our inheri- | tance for us,
the pride of Jacob, | whom God loves. R**

⁵God has gone up | with a shout,
the LORD with the sound | of the ram's horn.

⁶**Sing praises to | God, sing praises;
sing praises to our | king, sing praises. R**

⁷For God is king of | all the earth;
sing praises | with a song.

⁸**God reigns o- | ver the nations;
God is en- | throned on high.**

⁹The nobles of the peoples have gathered as the people of the | God of Abraham.
The rulers of the earth belong to God, who is high- | ly exalted. **R**

Second Reading: Ephesians 1:15-23

The risen and exalted Christ reigns over the entire universe. The author of Ephesians prays that we are given the wisdom to know the power of the risen Christ and the empowering hope that the knowledge of this inheritance provides.

¹⁵I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason ¹⁶I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. ¹⁷I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, ¹⁸so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, ¹⁹and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. ²⁰God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. ²²And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, ²³which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Gospel: Luke 24:44-53

On the day of his ascension, Jesus leaves his disciples with a commission, a blessing, and a promise of the Holy Spirit.

⁴⁴[Jesus said to the eleven and those with them,] “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.”⁴⁵Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, ⁴⁶and he said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.”

⁵⁰Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. ⁵¹While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. ⁵²And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; ⁵³and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

Sermon- *The Waiting Game*

Hymn- *You Are Mine*

Apostles Creed

Let us confess our faith in the words of the 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.**

Prayers of Intercession

Uplifted by the promised hope of healing and resurrection, we join the people of God in all times and places in praying for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

Living God, you chose us to be your witnesses in the world. We pray for the church in every place and the congregations in our community. Focus our hearts and minds on the ministry we share in your name.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Loving God, all creation sings praise to you. You delight in the oceans, and the mountains are your throne. Teach us humility and respect for our home.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Sovereign God, you rule the heavens, the earth, and time itself. Make this a time of justice, peace, and solidarity among all nations and peoples, so that oppression and violence rule no more.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Tender God, we wait with hope for your presence to heal us, bless us, restore us, and give us peace. You know all the names of those suffering for whom we pray this day and we pause to lift them to you now either silently or aloud.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Gentle God, you guide us as we seek wisdom. We pray for teachers, professors, theologians, day care workers, and all those charged with teaching the young and old. Give them endurance and persistence in their valuable work.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

With bold confidence in your love, almighty God, we place all for whom we pray into your eternal care; as together we pray the prayer that Jesus taught us....

Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be 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 trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

Blessing

May the One who brought forth Jesus from the dead
raise you to new life, fill you with hope,
and turn your mourning into dancing.

Almighty God, Father, ✝ Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you now and forever.

Amen.

Closing Hymn: *Blessed Be the Tie That Binds*

Dismissal

Christ is risen, just as he said.

Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!

Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

Worship Devotional- 05/24/20



Opening Prayer

Almighty God, your only Son was taken into the heavens and in your presence intercedes for us. Receive us and our prayers for all the world, and in the end bring everything into your glory, through Jesus Christ, our Sovereign and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Readings

Acts 1:1-11

Jesus sends the apostles

Psalm 47

God has gone up with a shout. (Ps. 47:5)

Ephesians 1:15-23

Eyes to see the risen and ascended Christ

Luke 24:44-53

Christ present in all times and places

Questions for Reflection

1. What is one thing you needed to hear from God this week that you heard in our scriptures?
2. What is it that God is trying to tell you?
3. What is it that God wants you to do in response to what God is telling you?

Prayers- (What do you have God to give thanks for? What worries you? What does the world need? How can God give you direction?)

Lord's Prayer- (Recite the Lord's Prayer)

Blessing- May the One who brought forth Jesus from the dead raise you to new life, fill you with hope, and turn your mourning into dancing.

Almighty God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

Amen.

Jesus and his Grace



As Christians we are all aware of the healing miracles that Jesus performed- the healing of the leper, the paralyzed servant, the blind man, the servant with the withered hand. He performed multitudes of miracles of healing.

But what about what to me is the bread and butter of Jesus and his teaching? The miracle of his compassion. The miracle of his grace. The times he stopped to touch a child's head, to speak to an old woman, his compassion in his treatment of Mary Magdalene. Everything we know about Jesus points to his unerring compassion. Imagine when he was traveling and preaching the gospel. Many verses speak of the crowds. Mark 5:24 says "And He went off with him; and a large crowd was following Him and pressing in on Him." The crowds would be surrounding him, asking him for a miracle, asking him to touch them, asking him for a word. Don't you feel claustrophobic just reading it?

So why do we as Christians spend more time speaking about our religion than we do showing our compassion and grace? When Jesus fed the thousands he did not first check to see if they would be his disciples. He did not require them to come to him to be saved, he simply filled their need. Feeding the poor does not define a Christian, it is part of being a Christian.

So I think what we as a church, and as Christians should be doing is showing our grace and compassion. We don't need to spout the bible to be a Christian, we need to show we are a Christian by our actions, our kindness, our speech, our tolerance of others different than us. As the hymn says "They will know we are Christians by our Love."

Questions for Reflection:

When you look at the life of Jesus what does God's Grace look like to you?

What are some ways that you show God's grace the same way that Jesus did?

What are some ways that you could grow in showing God's grace and compassion?

The following quote should be on our hearts:

We're called to be kind, and we cannot be authentically kind without being compassionate. Let this be the prayer of our hearts; that God's compassion would take up loose space in ours.

Kindness always has about it the ability to reduce the burdens of others. Let this be our test as to the gauge we use in alleviating the burdens of those within our circle of influence.

Steve Wickham, Australian Counselor and Pastor.

Devotion by: Donna Riccio