



**We will be
like him**

WORSHIP DEVOTIONAL

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Fresno, CA

April 18, 2021

Third Sunday of Easter

1 John 3:2, NRSV

We have expanded the devotional to include the parts of the service as it will be presented on Facebook. We will be streaming both services until further notice, the Praise and Celebration worship at 9:00 am. and the Traditional at 10:30 am. You may choose to follow along then or any time after the service is recorded. The videos are saved to the page, so you don't have to watch live if that doesn't work for you.

	Praise Service	Traditional Service
Opening Song	“Everlasting God” “Praise” “Friend of Sinners”	“Alleluia! Jesus Is Risen!” Ken Berg, Soloist. John Montgomery, Cello

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Refreshed by the resurrection life we share in Christ, let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

Water may be poured into the font as the presiding minister gives thanks.

We thank you, risen Christ, for these waters where you make us new, leading us from death to life, from tears to joy.

We bless you, risen Christ, that your Spirit comes to us in the grace-filled waters of rebirth, like rains to our thirsting earth, like streams that revive our souls, like cups of cool water shared with strangers.

Breathe your peace on your church when we hide in fear. Clothe us with your mercy and forgiveness.

Send us companions on our journey as we share your life.

Make us one, risen Christ.
Cleanse our hearts.
Shower us with life.

To you be given all praise, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God, now and forever.

Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Holy and righteous God, you are the author of life, and you adopt us to be your children. Fill us with your words of life, that we may live as witnesses to the resurrection of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

FIRST LESSON

Acts 3:12-19

New Revised Standard Version

¹² When Peter saw it, he addressed the people, “You Israelites,^[a] why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we had made him walk? ¹³ The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our ancestors has glorified his servant^[b] Jesus, whom you handed over and rejected in the presence of Pilate, though he had decided to release him. ¹⁴ But you rejected the Holy and Righteous One and asked to have a murderer given to you, ¹⁵ and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses. ¹⁶ And by faith in his name, his name itself has made this man strong, whom you see and know; and the faith that is through Jesus^[c] has given him this perfect health in the presence of all of you.

¹⁷ “And now, friends,^[d] I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. ¹⁸ In this way God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, that his Messiah^[e] would suffer. ¹⁹ Repent therefore, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out,



All who have this
HOPE IN HIM
purify themselves, just as
HE IS PURE.

1 JOHN 3:3, NRSV

SECOND LESSON

1 John 3:1-7

3 ¹ See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. ² Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he^[a] is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is. ³ And all who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

⁴ Everyone who commits sin is guilty of lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. ⁵ You know that he was revealed to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. ⁶ No one who abides in him sins; no one who sins has either seen him or known him. ⁷ Little children, let no one deceive you. Everyone who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous.

GOSPEL

Luke 24:36-48

Jesus Appears to His Disciples

³⁶ While they were talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you."^[a] ³⁷ They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost. ³⁸ He said to them, "Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? ³⁹ Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." ⁴⁰ And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet.^[b] ⁴¹ While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" ⁴² They gave him a piece of broiled fish, ⁴³ and he took it and ate in their presence.

⁴⁴ Then he said to 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." ⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand

the scriptures, ⁴⁶ and he said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Messiah^[c] is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses^[d] of these things.

SERMON

“WHY WE’RE OFTEN AFRAID”

Preaching text: Luke 24:36-48

Happy Easter! Easter isn’t just a day, but it is a season. Two Sundays ago, we gathered for Easter morning. That was a great day! We were opened for worship for the first time in months ... there was great music ... floral beauty ... joyful attitudes ... Easter Sunday is definitely a high point. But what now?

There is a story about a persistent salesman who tried unsuccessfully ... for several weeks ... to reach an extremely busy executive in an effort to land a large sale. Finally ... then he did manage to get the executive on the phone ... the salesman asked for an appointment. “Make a date with my secretary,” bellowed the busy executive. To which the persistent salesman replied, “Oh, I already did that ... and we had a FUN TIME ... but I think I still want to see you!”

And sooner or later it comes down to that ... “I HAD A FUN TIME ... BUT THAT’S NOT ENOUGH ... I STILL WANT TO SEE SOMETHING MORE SATISFYING ... SOMETHING MORE REWARDING ... SOMETHING MORE FULFILLING!”

In today’s gospel we hear about the evening of that first Easter. The disciples were hovering nervously together when Jesus shows up. Last week we heard how they locked themselves into the upper room out of fear. And Luke tells us in today’s gospel that the disciples were startled and afraid. How tragic it is when fear grips a person ... and people retreat into their own private world because something “out there” is just too threatening.

How about you? Are fears dominating your life? Are you living behind closed doors because you feel threatened? Today let’s look at WHY the disciples were afraid ... and WHY we might be afraid ... and HOW those fears can be overcome.

One reason the disciples were hiding behind closed doors may have been the PROLIFERATION OF RUMORS in Jerusalem at the time of Jesus' crucifixion. The disciples were terrified because they were afraid of losing their own lives. Now there is no evidence in the Bible that such fears were justified then. There is no evidence that the violence of that terrible weekend went beyond the torture and death of Jesus with the two criminals. But undoubtedly there were rumors. There always seem to be. Rumor's fly ... fear escalates ... and reason is suspended.

Consider the current political situation. We are so far beyond just rumors. We are arguing over what truth means. We hear about "fake news." All that means is your version of the truth is different than mine. But how can that be? In reality, there is only one truth. Then there is opinion.

Do you have a favorite conspiracy theory? I don't. I despise them all. I have never seen untruth used so broadly and have it so widely accepted. Actually, it is risky even bringing this up because statistics say some people here have bought in to them. I don't remember a time in my lifetime where politics were so polarized. Unfortunately, truth has been cannibalized.

It is tragic when rumors control our lives. The disciples were hovering ... terrified ... behind locked doors. 1st of all, because of the proliferation of rumors.

Secondly, the disciples were afraid because THEY HAD TEMPORARILY MISPLACED THEIR FAITH. Now, these were not agnostics or atheists that Jesus had recruited. They probably grew up reciting "The Lord is my shepherd" in their synagogues. They were familiar with the stories of Abraham and Sarah and Joshua and Moses and the other heroes and heroines of the faith.

And on top of everything ... they had been with Jesus for 3 years. How many times had Jesus told them do not be afraid? Hadn't any of it rubbed off on them?

But we forget sometimes too ... the promises that God will provide for every need ... the promises that God will give us strength to deal with whatever comes our way ... the promises that God is in control.

But there was one more reason why the disciples felt afraid ... and that is ... THEY FELT ABANDONED. There was something about the presence of Jesus that gave them a sense of calm even in the presence of imminent danger. There was that time Jesus calmed the storm and walked out to the boat where they were huddling. The 1st words he spoke were these ... "FEAR NOT. IT IS I!"

But where was he now? Crucified! Gone from them! There they were ... sheep without a shepherd ... left to face the cold, cruel world on their own. Psychologists tell us that abandonment is one of the greatest fears of childhood. It is the reason why some children are afraid to go to sleep ... or to be left with the babysitter ... or to start nursery school. Children need a lot of reassurance ... because deep in their hearts is the fear that their parents are never coming back.

The disciples huddled behind closed doors because they felt abandoned. But the good news is JESUS CAN PENETRATE THE CLOSED DOORS OF OUR LIVES.

One of the greatest realizations we can make is that when we are part of the Church we never have to be all alone again! Oh, there are times that we will choose to be alone, and that is important at times, but we never have to be alone again because we have brothers and sisters in the faith who will be with us. We remember the promise, "Wherever 2 or more are gathered in my name ... there I am in the midst of them."

Because of the death and resurrection of Jesus ... he is not limited to a physical body where he can only be in 1 place and 1 time ... and that means we are never abandoned. Jesus is with us wherever we go ... and he's with us whatever we do! What an incredible realization that is!

AMEN.

	Praise Service	Traditional Service
Special Music	"Word of God Speak"	"Spirit Song"
		Ken Berg, Soloist



PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

Heavenly Father, after Jesus' resurrection, the people around Him were amazed; actually, the Gospel of Luke says they were startled and terrified. This man had been dead, and now He was alive! Plus, his disciples were accomplishing miracles, by declaring health in the name of Jesus. We would be amazed, too! Our lesson from Acts explains how, *"by faith in [Jesus'] name, his name itself has made this man strong, whom you see and know; and the faith that is through Jesus has given him this perfect health in the presence of all of you."* Lord, give us the faith to believe in miracles. **Lord in your mercy...**

Those same actions of love and mercy are being accomplished today in the name of Jesus. Even signs and wonders are appearing within the Church of Jesus Christ. The Jesus of the resurrection is the same God that we serve today; His love for humankind hasn't diminished or changed. Lord, use us for your amazing work to help, to heal and to deliver. **Lord in your mercy...**

We pray for our nation, state and city; our president, governor, mayor and the leaders of the world that all nations might work together for peace. God created Adam and Eve for fellowship with Him. They sinned and broke that relationship. God cannot look upon sin. His message to all people is, *"Repent therefore, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out."* When we do that, our status changes, 1 John 3 says, *"Beloved, we are God's children now."* That is God's desire for the entire world: that we live as God's children in the power of his love. **Lord in your mercy...**

Remember this congregation, its pastor and people, as we share the love of Jesus. Touch those who have asked for prayer with healing, comfort and renewal. We lift to you members of our congregation who have asked for prayer. **Lord in your mercy...**

"See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God, and that is what we are." What a privilege to be children of a living God who created the universe and has the power to raise the dead. Thank you, Holy Father, in Jesus' mighty name, we pray. **Amen.**

CAROLYN T. LINN

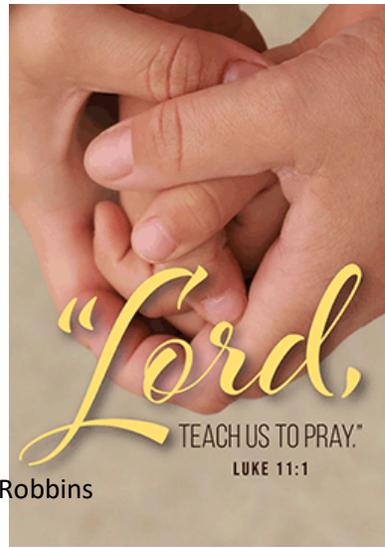
PRAYER CONCERNS

Members in Need of Prayer:

John Bender
Neil & Verna Walden
Karla Sutton
Susan Berg
Connie Alvarado
Margie Kinler
George Weber
William & Liz Smith
Richard & Kay Schumacher
Paul Werfelmann
Irene Pierini
Jocelyn Miller
Juana On & Family
Kirsten Linder
Stacy Lairson
Jim Thompson
Addie Dornbusch
Anthony On & Family
David Adamcik & Dee Dee Mello
Betty Snyder
Mary & Patrick Norris and Children

Family and Friends:

Janet Sharp (Diane's Sister)
Taylor Waltrip & Family
Sean Walker & Family
Marshal, Christopher & Nathan Robbins
(Arlene's Grandsons)
Peggy Mitchem & Family (Gordon's Sister)
Karl & Pauline Ritterbush & Pauline's Sister
Darlee (Mary & Patrick's Grandma)
Jade Dixon
Mike D
Anthony Chollichio
Jim & Margie (Liz's Grandpa and his wife)
Kim Carlson
Eladio, Celia & Family (Roeding Family)
Rev. Arlynne Turnquist
Melissa Melton
Kim Boren & Family
Linda (Sandy's Neighbor)
Family & Friends of Rev. Jane Schlager (Gloria's
Friend) upon her passing
Molly (Mary & Patrick's Aunt)
Mickey Cecil & Vergie G. (Friends of Patrick Norris)
Randy and Carol Rowe (Neil & Verna Walden's
Daughter and Son-in-Law)
Eric and Cathy Bose (Cecile Bachar's Daughter
And Son-in-Law)




*Lord,
Hear Our
Prayer*

*Keep
These Friends
in Your
Heart*



The 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,
For ever and ever.

Amen

Matthew 6:9-13

Closing

Praise Service
"Jesus Messiah"

Traditional Service
"Thine Is The Glory"
Ken Berg & John Montgomery, Duet



... **repentance** and
forgiveness of sins
is to be **proclaimed**

in **JESUS**

NAME

to all nations ...

LUKE 24:47, NRSV

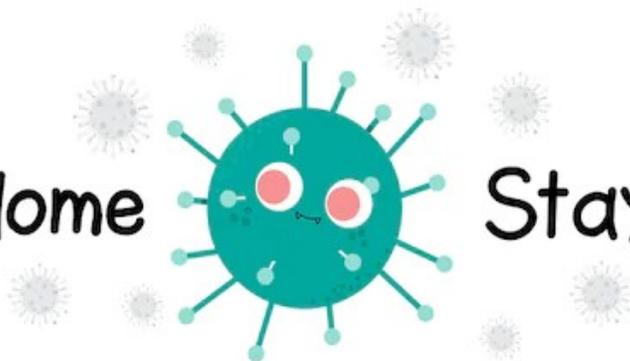
Kathy has included a page for taking notes while you go through the Worship Devotional and a page to color. It has been found that coloring reduces stress and calms a person.

DID YOU KNOW THAT SAYING THE LORD'S PRAYER TAKES EXACTLY AS LONG AS THE CDC RECOMMENDS YOU WASH YOUR HANDS?



*Love your neighbor. Love your God.
Wash and Pray.*

Stay Home



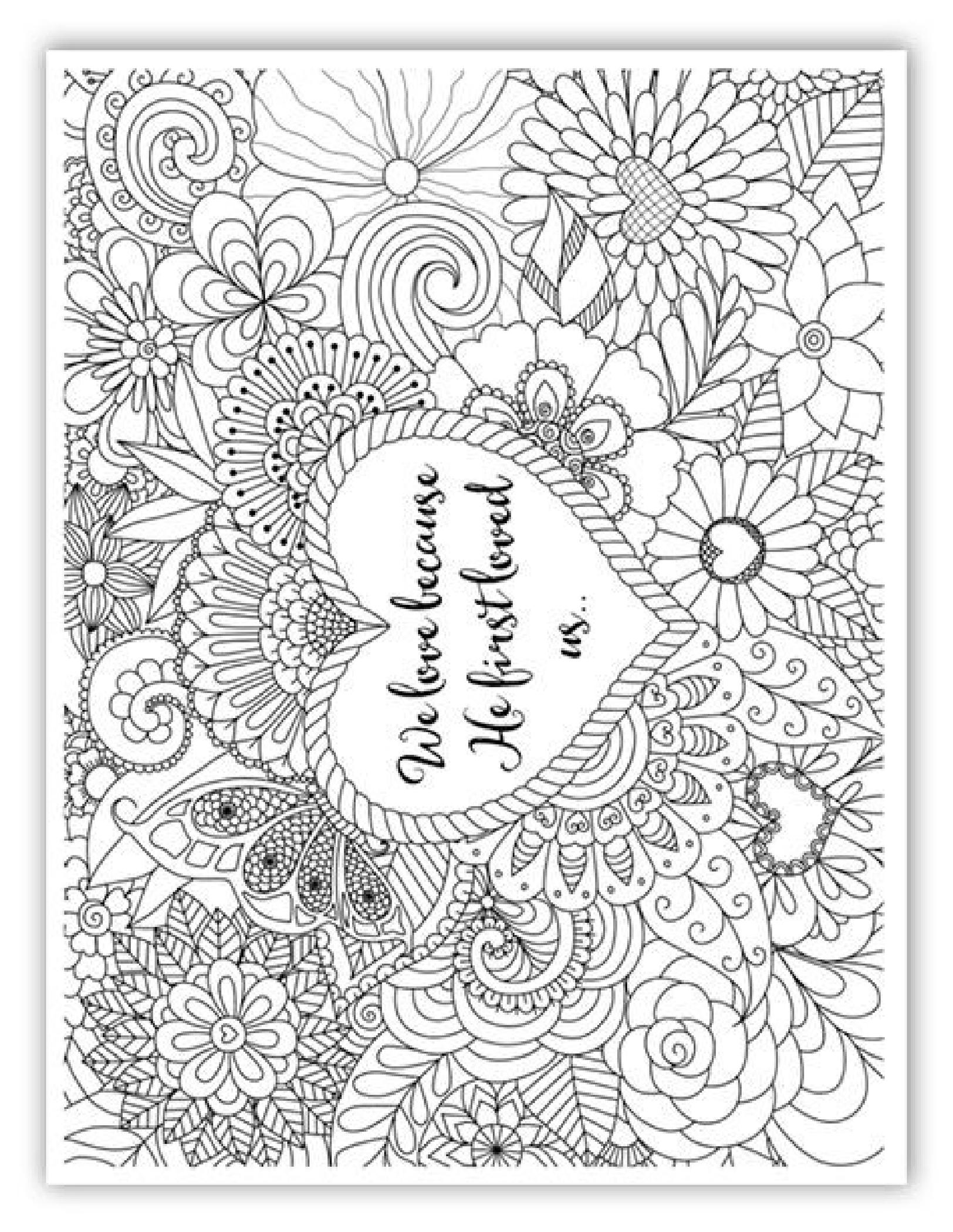
Stay Safe



STAY IN PEACE! SERVE THE LORD! WASH YOUR HANDS! THANKS BE TO GOD!

Our mission statement:

SHARING THE LOVE OF JESUS



*We love because
He first loved
us..*

GLORIAM

The

Everlasting

God

The Lord is the true God;
He is the living God
and the everlasting King.

Jeremiah 10:10