



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

Service of the Word – The Holy Trinity – June 7, 2020

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The following content for a Service of the Word may be used by synods and congregations who wish to assemble a recorded worship service to surround the recorded sermon from ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton. Adaptations for local use are encouraged.

SERVICE OF THE WORD

Gathering

LAMENTING THE GRIP OF MELANCHOLY

With Job of old we cry out:
Everywhere the innocent suffer.
Our desires and efforts achieve us little.
O God, are you good, yet do nothing to help us?
Our answers have holes, and we fall through.

Hear us, O God:
Hear us, O God.

Revive us with hope:
Revive us with hope.

Give us your life:
Give us your life.

A time of silence is kept.

Hear these words, and receive their power:
The majesty of God the Father undergirds all that is.
The mercy of God the Son accepts our despair.
The comfort of God the Spirit embraces us in communities of care.

Thanks be to God:
Thanks be to God.

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.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

God of heaven and earth, before the foundation of the universe and the beginning of time you are the triune God: Author of creation, eternal Word of salvation, life-giving Spirit of wisdom.

Guide us to all truth by your Spirit, that we may proclaim all that Christ has revealed and rejoice in the glory he shares with us. Glory and praise to you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and forever.

Amen.

Word

FIRST READING: Genesis 1:1--2:4a

A reading from Genesis.

¹In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, ²the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. ³Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. ⁴And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light Day, and the darkness God called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

⁶And God said, “Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” ⁷So God made the dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so. ⁸God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

⁹And God said, “Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. ¹⁰God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together God called Seas. And God saw that it was good. ¹¹Then God said, “Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it.” And it was so. ¹²The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that it was good. ¹³And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

¹⁴And God said, “Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, ¹⁵and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. ¹⁶God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. ¹⁷God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, ¹⁸to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

²⁰And God said, “Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.” ²¹So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. ²²God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” ²³And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

²⁴And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind.” And it was so. ²⁵God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

²⁶Then God said, “Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.”

²⁷So God created humankind in the divine image,
in the image of God humankind was created;
male and female God created them.

²⁸God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.” ²⁹God said, “See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. ³⁰And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. ³¹God saw everything that had been made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

^{2:1}Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their multitude. ²And on the seventh day God finished the work that had been done, and God rested on the seventh day from all the work that had been done. ³So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that God had done in creation.

^{4a}These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING: Galatians 5:22-25

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. ²⁴ And those *who are* Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

THIRD READING: 2 Corinthians 13:11-13

A reading from Second Corinthians.

[Paul writes:] ¹¹Finally, brothers and sisters, farewell. Put things in order, listen to my appeal, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. ¹²Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints greet you.

¹³The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: Matthew 28:16-20

Bishop Eaton reads the gospel on video prior to her sermon. Or, a local reader may read the gospel and then begin the video at the sermon.

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹⁶Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them.

¹⁷When they saw Jesus, they worshiped him; but some doubted. ¹⁸And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton preaches a sermon on video.

Silence for reflection follows the sermon.

My thoughts and response to the sermon:

Thank you Presiding Bishop Eaton for your words. These are hard times, and in hard times it is difficult to speak truth into, but I think the bishop has given us wisdom and guidance to give some direction for our thoughts, actions, and prayers. The racial tensions and injustice of late have created uncomfortable thoughts for many white folks, but have renewed terror and deep pain for our siblings of color, especially our African American siblings. That is the essence of the difference in privilege, is how situations only make white people who look like me uncomfortable while it makes people who have darker skin, people who look like George Floyd, feel real fear for their lives in this country.

As the African American novelist, poet, and activist James Baldwin said: “I love America more than any other country in this world, and, exactly for this reason, I insist on the right to

criticize her perpetually.” This statement encapsulates the division and dissonance many of us feel with deep love for this country and yet great sadness and confusion when things like this happen here. Thus, though we do continue to love this country, we must criticize it when injustice is allowed to persist. As Bishop Eaton said: We must show up.

Remain focused, focused on the reason there are protests and riots. Channel anger and indignation to support those working for justice, listen when their voices should and need to be heard instead of your own, and humbly give voice to the voiceless. As Bishop Eaton reminds us, our Triune God, the Trinity is relationship. And in order to honor our relationship with God, we must work to strengthen our relationships with our siblings of color in whatever way we can, so that the justice and equality which God intended can become reality. And to energize and sustain us in our work, we have the grace of Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, now and always. Amen

CREED

The Nicene Creed is especially appropriate on festival days.

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.**

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.

Gathered into the mystery of the Trinity, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of God's creation.

A brief silence.

God of community, you form us as your church. Guide our bishops, pastors, and deacons as they lead the church in these trying times. With all the baptized, may they be strengthened to share the good news of Jesus Christ, and in prayer and action, strive for peace and justice in all the earth. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of creation, you called everything into being. Sustain this world with your renewing care. Instill in us a deeper wonder for the created world you've called good, and a greater humility for our place within it. Kindle in us a creative and resilient spirit as we care for the earth and its creatures. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of counsel, all authority belongs to you. Encourage leaders to seek wisdom and respond with courage and compassion to those most in need. We pray for community leaders in this time of unrest (*especially*). Further the work of advocates who pursue justice in often ignored communities (*like Chief Seattle, whom we commemorate today*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of care, you created us in your image; we are your beloved children. May we recognize your likeness in one another. We pray for all mourning the death of your beloved child, George Floyd. Hold in your loving embrace all experiencing trauma, fear, uncertainty, and loss (*especially*). Protect vulnerable children and adults from violence or neglect; provide what is needed for those lacking access to food, shelter, and other services. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of healing, you accompany us in sickness and suffering. Bring relief to all afflicted with the coronavirus and all those isolated now more than ever, especially those in prison or care facilities. Strengthen caregivers, health workers, and all whose work ensures the safety and well-being of others. Console, heal, and nourish all in need this day (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of connection, you call us to make your presence known. Accompany people of faith as they nurture relationships in new ways. Where the sin of racism fractures our relationships, bring repentance and reconciliation. Free us for the difficult work ahead in our congregations and communities. Open our hearts for attentive listening so that our places of connection are filled with your Spirit. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of compassion, you comfort us in our grief with the promise of the resurrection. We give you thanks for the saints of all time and in our lives (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Receive these prayers, O God, and those too deep for words; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

At the time of the intercessions or at another appropriate time, you may wish to use this prayer for racial justice.

Save us, O God, from ourselves,
from racism often cloaked in pious words,
from the machinations of white supremacy hidden in calls for civility,
from micro aggressions thinly veiled in arrogance,
from apologies when they don't give way to action,
from forgiveness without facing the truth,
from reconciliation without reparation.

Deliver us, O God, from expecting siblings of color to continue to bear this emotional work,
which is not theirs to do.

Grateful for the long arc that bends toward justice, we pray:
Grant us wisdom,
give us courage for the facing of these days,
by the power of the Spirit, all for the sake of the kin-dom that we share in Christ Jesus.
Amen.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

Let us pray.
Praise and thanks to you, holy God, for by your Word you made all things:
you spoke light into darkness, called forth beauty from chaos,
and brought life into being.
For your Word of life, O God,
we give you thanks and praise.

By your Word you called your people Israel to tell of your wonderful gifts:
freedom from captivity, water on the desert journey,
a pathway home from exile, wisdom for life with you.
For your Word of life, O God,
we give you thanks and praise.

Through Jesus, your Word made flesh, you speak to us and call us to witness:

forgiveness through the cross, life to those entombed by death,
the way of your self-giving love.
For your Word of life, O God,
we give you thanks and praise.

Send your Spirit of truth, O God; rekindle your gifts within us:
renew our faith, increase our hope,
and deepen our love, for the sake of a world in need.
Faithful to your Word, O God, draw near to all who call on you;
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord,
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,
be honor and glory forever. **Amen.**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name,

your kingdom come,

your will be done,

on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial

and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,

now and forever. Amen.

Sending

A PRAYER FOR THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT AMONG THE PEOPLE OF GOD.

The following ecumenical call to common prayer may be prayed at this point. More about this prayer can be found on the [Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations Blog](#).

God of all power and love, we give thanks for your unfailing presence
and the hope you provide in times of uncertainty and loss.
Send your Holy Spirit to enkindle in us your holy fire.
Revive us to live as Christ's body in the world:
a people who pray, worship, learn, break bread, share life, heal neighbors,
bear good news, seek justice, rest and grow in the Spirit.
Wherever and however we gather,
unite us in common prayer and send us in common mission,
that we and the whole creation might be restored and renewed,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

BLESSING

The presiding minister proclaims God's blessing.

The holy Three, the holy One

increase your hope,

strengthen your faith,

deepen your love,

and + grant you peace.

Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go forth into the world to serve God with gladness; be of good courage;

hold fast to that which is good; render to no one evil for evil;

strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak;

help the afflicted; honor all people;

love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

And go in peace. Christ is with you.

Thanks be to God.

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