



Sunday Devotion for Martin Luther Church

2nd Sunday of Easter
April 19, 2020

A warm welcome to watch this devotion at
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ir4SwlyFj6M>

A. GATHERING

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

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray:

Almighty and eternal God, the strength of those who believe and the hope of those who doubt, may we, who have not seen, have faith in you and receive the fullness of Christ's blessing, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

B. WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

Psalm 16

16:1 Protect me, O God, for in you I take refuge.

16:2 I say to the LORD, "You are my Lord; I have no good apart from you."

16:3 As for the holy ones in the land, they are the noble, in whom is all my delight.

16:4 Those who choose another god multiply their sorrows; their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out or take their names upon my lips.

16:5 The LORD is my chosen portion and my cup; you hold my lot. .

16:6 The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; I have a goodly heritage.

16:7 I bless the LORD who gives me counsel; in the night also my heart instructs me.

16:8 I keep the LORD always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

16:9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices; my body also rests secure.

[16:10](#) For you do not give me up to Sheol, or let your faithful one see the Pit.

[16:11](#) You show me the path of life. In your presence there is fullness of joy; in your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

First Reading: Acts 2:14a, 22-32

^{14a}Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed [the crowd],

22 "You that are Israelites, listen to what I have to say: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with deeds of power, wonders, and signs that God did through him among you, as you yourselves know—²³this man, handed over to you according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of those outside the law. ²⁴But God raised him up, having freed him from death, because it was impossible for him to be held in its power. ²⁵For David says concerning him,

'I saw the Lord always before me,
for he is at my right hand so that I will not be shaken;
26therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced;
moreover my flesh will live in hope.
27For you will not abandon my soul to Hades,
or let your Holy One experience corruption.
28You have made known to me the ways of life;
you will make me full of gladness with your presence.'

29"Fellow Israelites, I may say to you confidently of our ancestor David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. 30Since he was a prophet, he knew that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would put one of his descendants on his throne. 31Foreseeing this, David spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, saying, 'He was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh experience corruption.'
32This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses."

Gospel Reading: John 20:19-31

The Holy Gospel according to John.

¹⁹When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁰After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." ²²When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

²⁴But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

²⁶A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."

²⁷Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." ²⁸Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"

²⁹Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

³⁰Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. ³¹But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

P: The word of the Lord.
A: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon- Vicar Adam McComb

Here we are together again on the Second Sunday of Easter at the end of the Octave of Easter or Eastertide. This Sunday is also called White Sunday, Divine Mercy Sunday, I know it as Low Sunday, likely the clearest name is Thomas Sunday used by our Eastern brethren.



The name for Sunday, this season, and even the liturgical colours used are very different from place to place, church to church, and now house to house, rich and fascinating differences. The reason for the season, however, the unifier is a constant, imperishable, undefiled, unfading, indescribable, power, wonder, blessed, he is Peace, to borrow from each of our readings today we are not going to delve into the debate of the dates and authors of these texts, we can argue about dates and doubt after **at 11 am during coffee chat and sermon discussion** with the link provided below. When introducing our unifier, our Christ, I used some of the attributes and adjectives used in all of our readings, Acts, First Peter, and the Gospel of our Lord according to John which our lectionary has placed in that order which is chronological order.

1. Acts
2. First Peter
3. The Gospel of John

I know it sounds like an aggressive feat of theological acrobatics to try and pull all three together, but we are **going** to do it, friends. Not doubting Thomas in this crowd. As I spent time with these readings that is not what I heard, not what the spirit wanted me to see, to experience. I found myself in the reading from John, I could see myself there, in the third reading and last book to be written, it brings together all the things we heard of God throughout our readings, and it brings us to The upper room, There is a feeling of the important gathers that happened there, the plans made, the joy exchanged, The last supper, to us Eucharist... But that was **BEFORE** We read... it was the same day that the empty tomb was discovered by Mary Magdalene the Doors are locked it says for fear of the Jews, for fear of those just outside the door. You can sense their emotions, imagine their hurried conversations, retracing every detail, No news coming in and then too much news coming in hurried conversations, speculations, misinterpretations and fear. Some short tempers, frustrations, fears, a lack of clarity all exacerbated by closeness isolation.

Isolated

Fearful

Doubtful

Sadly that is where I found myself in this story, our story, maybe you do too, here in a big room it could be any room, thinking of the times and moments shared, but that was **BEFORE**

Now Self Isolating with and from my colleagues and others who couldn't go home, Isolating form the world fearful who or what might come through the door and bring with them an unseen agent of harm doubtful it will ever be normal again it is no news and too much news, on tv, on our phones, streaming at us all day.

Hurried conversations, speculations, misinterpretations, and fear-mongering. The anxiety it that room must have been building, as we made our way through our readings, we can sense

that,
But HOPE was also building, unexpectedly somewhere, it was building. We learned;
God is always at my right hand
God Will NOT abandon me (FOCUS ON THAT TERM)
God Makes known the ways of life
God Makes me full of gladness
From our psalm we learned;
God is our refuge
My Good above all other
My portion and my cup
My counsellor
From 1st Peter we learned God;
Has given new birth
The protector
Knowing this, in John 20 we read Jesus enters the locked room, his people stand there;
Isolated

Fearful

Doubtful

That's the way I saw them, that's what I read, but to Christ, they were not any of those things,
they were;

Hopeful

Expectant

And Gathered

He would have seen the anxiety, but he fed into the hope and he delivers the Holy Spirit to
them, to US, the sustainer, in our midst.

Just like those in the upper room, who were;

Hopeful

Expectant

There gathered

The gift of the Holy Spirit means we should be;

Hopeful

Expectant

Not gathered though!!!

The Word enlivened by the Spirit allows us to confidently say

I will not be shaken

My flesh will live in hope

God is loving,

at work,

and our refuge.

We are so similar to those in the upper room, there will be doubt,
some fear, and likely some short tempers and disagreements in this time but I pray I always
know and listen for the stirring of the Spirit, with whom I am truly hopeful and expectant,
even when we can't be gathered, and I pray you are too.

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.

Open the doors we close, O God, when we fear those who worship you in different ways. Guide us to unity and harmony so that we may come to respect and cherish our commonalities.

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

Open the rooms we need, O God, for the Martin Luther Church Day Care which would have celebrated its 50th anniversary this week. We pray for all our day care staff, the children, parents and board members, to stay healthy and well until we can meet again.

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

Open the paths we ignore, O God, when we prioritize financial gain and convenience over listening to the groaning of the earth. Inspire all to care for the world you have made so that living things might thrive.

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

Open the places we lock, O God, to those who live without a homeland or place of safety. We pray that generous nations offer refuge and peace for all.

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

Open the hearts we close, O God, to the cries of those in pain. We pray for those isolated physically or emotionally through incarceration, addiction, mental illness, chronic suffering, grief, and all in need *especially for Ollie Gilke on her way back to Delmanor.*

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

Open the ways of love, O God, in the pursuit of peace throughout the world, and bless the efforts of missionaries, healthcare professionals, activists for women and children, and relief workers, especially those who find themselves in harm's way.

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

Open the space of thanksgiving, O God, for all who celebrated their birthdays this week. Marion Ganter, Marco Schmidt, Friedrich Budnik, Ursula Pahnke und Oskar Buchholz.

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

Open the way to eternal life, O God, as we remember those who have died in faith (*especially Olavus Petri and Laurentius Petri, renewers of the church*). Free us from the fear of death, that we embrace the peace you have promised.

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; through Christ our Lord.

Amen.



Iris Schweiger, Church President



50 Years
Martin Luther
Daycare

C. SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

Blessing & Dismissal

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

The God of steadfastness and encouragement
grant you to live in harmony with one another,
in accordance with Christ Jesus.

Amen.

The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,
so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The God of all grace bless you now and forever.

Amen.

Go in peace, to love and serve the Lord

Thanks be to God.

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