

Sunday Devotion for Martin Luther Church

5th Sunday of Easter
May 10, 2020



A warm welcome to watch this devotion and related videos at
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Bi-9glnWy4&list=PLIjEQnirqCMNybgjltWNcuDTmIXFkUBda>

A. GATHERING

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

Words of Welcome

Grace and peace to you in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Good morning members and friends of Martin Luther Church. My name is Tanya and I am one of the lay preachers here at Martin Luther. I am so happy to be celebrating worship with you this morning.



Today is a special Sunday, today we take time to celebrate mothers. We might celebrate our own Mothers, we might celebrate our Mother-in Laws, or grandmothers or aunts. We might celebrate ladies who play an important part in who we are and who we will become. We might even celebrate fathers who have taken over the role of mothers. We celebrate the love these ladies (and sometimes men) have given us and continue to give us, they encourage us, they nurture us and they support us.

Even though I am not celebrating with my mother this morning, I'd like to thank her for all she has done and continues to do to support me. Thank you mom.

Today is also a special day for one of our members. Frieda Penno turns 90 years young today. We would like to wish her all the best, good health and God's blessing. May the grass beneath your feet always be green. May the skies that you walk beneath always be blue. May your life always overflow with happiness and love. Happy birthday from Martin Luther Church!

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray:

Almighty God, your Son Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. Give us grace to love one another, to follow in the way of his commandments, and to share his risen life with all the world, for he 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 31:1-5, 15-16

1 In you, O Lord, have I taken refuge; let me never be put to shame; deliver me in your righteousness.

**2 Incline your ear to me;
make haste to deliver me.**

3 Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe, for you are my crag and my stronghold; for the sake of your name, lead me and guide me.

**4 Take me out of the net that they have secretly set for me,
for you are my tower of strength.**

5 Into your hands I commend my spirit,
for you have redeemed me, O Lord, God of truth.

**15 My times are in your hand;
rescue me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who persecute me.**

16 Let your face shine upon your servant;
save me in your steadfast love."

First Reading: Acts 7:55-60, read by Sabrina

Stephen was one of the seven men chosen by the apostles to serve tables so that the apostles could be free to serve the word (Acts 6:1-6). Stephen does more than distribute food, however. For his preaching of God's word, he becomes the first martyr of the faith.

Filled with the Holy Spirit, [Stephen] gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. "Look," he said, "I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!" But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him; and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he died.

Gospel Reading: John 14:1-14, read by Gabrielle and Holden

[Jesus said to the disciples:] "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going." Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him."

Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied." Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father

is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it."

Sermon- Tanya Zielke, Lay Preacher

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

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

When I was younger, my family and I would spend our summers taking road trips not only across Canada but across the US as well. There was the trip to Florida, the trip to the East coast, the trip to the Grand Canyon, and MANY, many trips across Canada to visit with my uncle and grandmother in Calgary. Before we left, my mom would head over to the nearest CAA office and pick up the TripTick that she had ordered for the specific place we were headed. If you're wondering what a TripTick is, it's a map that has been bound that contains information on hotels and places to eat and things to see. My dad was always the driver and my mom would sit beside him and follow that map, flipping to the next page every few kilometers.

The map was very helpful to us in finding the way to where we were going. Without it, we would surely have gotten lost many times.

Today we travel less as a family, but when we do we seldom ever use a paper fold-out road map. My dad uses Lucy, our GPS and my mom has a built-in GPS in her new car. How does GPS work? Well, when you are ready to go somewhere, you type in the address where you want to go and the GPS connects to a satellite up above the earth and computes the path to your destination. As soon as you start driving, a map appears on the screen and a voice from the GPS gives you turn by turn directions. "Turn right on Main Street in one km, turn right in 500 m, turn right in 150 m, turn right." What happens if you miss your turn? The GPS says, "Recalculating" and immediately computes a new route to get you back on the right path to your destination. My mom, who is not always great at north, south, left, right, has one of these GPS in her car - and trust me, she really needs it.

When we are trying to follow Jesus in our daily life, it would be nice to have a GPS to lead us in the right direction, wouldn't it? A Map that we could follow, a TripTick that helps us get from one place to another. It would be nice to have something to keep us on the right path and keep us from getting lost...something that would help us get back on the right track when we made a wrong decision, a "recalculating" feature. Life is not easy. We don't always know which road to follow, which path to take. Some paths seem easier, some seem harder. Should we go the easier route or the one with more challenges? Do we make a decision to go left (but should have gone right) because it looked like the right way to go?

When we are trying to find our way through the journey of life, we need some help in finding the right way to go, don't we? Each day we face many difficult decisions and it is sometimes hard to know which way to turn. We don't always know where to go, or even who to listen to. Do this, do that, go here, go there... Who is right? Who will bring me closer to God? What should I do?

Some people use their feelings to make decisions. They say, "I'm going to do this because it just feels like the right thing to do." Is that the best way to make decisions? Sometimes....but our feelings may change from day to day, and just because we feel good about something doesn't mean that it is always the right thing to do.

Some people make choices by what's popular. When I was younger, I'd try and convince my mom to let me do something by saying, "But everybody's doing it"?

"Well, you're not everybody..." She used to say that just because everyone else is doing it doesn't mean that it is the right thing to do, does it? Besides, tomorrow everyone might be doing something else.

There is one sure way to know if we are going in the right direction in life—and that is to follow Jesus. Live a life in his image, be a good person, help others, share what you have, love others, be faithful. Do what Jesus would have done.

Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." We know where we want to go, we want to go to heaven. And now, we know the way. Jesus is the way. If we follow him, we know we are on the right path and headed in the right direction. Jesus' disciples didn't know the way at first either.

That is the way Jesus' disciples must have felt when Jesus told them that he was going to leave them. Jesus said to them, "I am going to prepare a place for you and when everything is ready, I will come and get you so that you will always be with me. You know the way to where I am going."

One of the disciples whose name was Thomas answered Jesus, "No, we don't, Lord. We don't even know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" Jesus answered him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me."

Another disciple named Philip joined in, "Lord, show us the Father and we will be satisfied."

"Philip," Jesus answered, "Have you been with me all this time and you still don't know who I am? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father! So why are you asking me to show you the Father? Just believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me. Anyone who believes in me will do the same things I have done."

That was all the disciples needed to know to get them on the right path to the Father. They trusted that Jesus would lead them to the right place, that Jesus would help them make the right choices to arrive safely. Just like my mom trusted her TripTick when it came to family road trips.

So, how do you and I find our way to the place where Jesus has gone to be with the Father? We don't have a TripTick for that, we don't have an inner GPS that will show us the way and we have not seen or spent time with Jesus as Thomas and Philip had, but we can follow the teachings that he has given to us in the Bible -- God's Holy Word. That is our GPS and it will keep us on the right path! Reading the Bible, following the commandments, being good global citizens, being kind and thoughtful and sharing our time, talents and treasures - All of these act as our internal GPS. They help lead us down the right path, a path that will lead us to

Jesus and our place with him. A place in God's house. Where is this house?

God's house is in heaven. How do we get there? What must we do? Being a good Christian, being a good person, accepting others for who they are and not judging them. We need to love each other and accept the differences between us. Accepting and loving each other for our differences is key in getting to this place we call heaven.

In God's house, there are many apartments or dwellings (as the text says). And in each of these apartments live different people. Each person might have different furniture, different paint colour, and different accessories. They are not the same that you are used to, you might not even think that you could ever live in that apartment, but for the person who lives there, it works, it's comfortable, it's home. Even though we live in different dwellings, different apartments, we all still belong to God. He accepts us for our differences, and he accepts us even if our path to him is different

We might not all be connected right now, we might be kept apart by distance, by social distancing measures... but when we move into our new dwelling place - we will live in this one house, in this one dwelling and it will be great. We won't have to go anywhere to see each other - we will be connected through God.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for sending your Son to provide the way to eternal life. Thank you for your Holy Word which will keep us on the right path in our journey through life.

And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, may keep our hearts and minds in Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Hymn: I Know that My Redeemer Lives! ELW 619

I know that my Redeemer lives! / What comfort this sweet sentence gives!
He lives, he lives, who once was dead; / he lives, my ever-living head!

He lives triumphant from the grave; / he lives eternally to save;
he lives exalted, throned above; / he lives to rule his church in love.

He lives to grant me rich supply; / he lives to guide me with his eye;
he lives to comfort me when faint; / he lives to hear my soul's complaint.

He lives to silence all my fears; / he lives to wipe away my tears;
he lives to calm my troubled heart; / he lives all blessings to impart.

Prayers of Intercession, read by Tanya and Leanne

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. Build us up, mothering God, as living stones united in your spiritual house. Continually strengthen your church as it is sent forth to proclaim your love. We pray especially for new congregations and those in redevelopment. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Nurturing God, we pray for those who tend and teach young children, for the safe pregnancies of expectant parents, and for families who struggle with infertility and miscarriage. We give thanks for all who have shown mothering care, and we remember all for

whom this day is difficult. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Humble us, creator God, as part of your creation. Fill us with respect and awe for the world you have made, including volcanoes, ocean currents, tropical rainstorms, glaciers, and other forces that both destroy and create. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God, bring us peace. Be with those who are celebrating their birthdays in ways they could not have imagined. Keep them safe and show them your love. We remember all who are celebrating birthdays this week, including Elvira, Frieda, Gerhard, Alexander, Gary, Marita, and Iris. Hear our cry, O God. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Align our ways to your love, O God. We pray for countries, leaders, and other organizations as they prepare places for those seeking refuge and safety. We pray especially for those who are working hard to find a cure and vaccine for the COVID-19 Virus. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Lord, we thank you for all mothers. For the new ones, who endure sleepless nights with infants in arms. For the busy ones, who juggle the pressures of home and family life. For the steadfast ones, who nurture and care for our special vulnerable children. For the patient ones, who always seek to forgive and engage with their teens and pre-teens. For the persistent ones, who cleverly find new ways to connect with their mini-adults. For the mother aunts, who step in to cradle and care for nieces and nephews. For all grandmas, who love and support their precious grandchildren. For the foster moms that are called to gather and cover the fragile ones. For moms who have lost children, and for those who cannot have children. For the Sunday moms who care for our children and lead them in faith. For the moms who give far beyond their own resources, who overcome difficult circumstances to cherish and love. Thank you Lord for all our beautiful mothers. Help us to support them and keep them in our prayers. May you bless them now on this, their special day. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of healing and rest, help those whose hearts are heavy and weighed down by many troubles. Comfort their suffering, ease their distress, and carry their burdens. We pray for those who are sick, those who cannot leave the house and all those who are caring for others. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Generous God, you call into your brilliant light all who have died. Give us faith to take hold of the promise of your eternal life. With bold confidence in your love, almighty God, we place all for whom we pray into your eternal care; through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

C. SENDING

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

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. My all mothers we blessed today and always. Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

Amen.

Dismissal

Go in peace. Share the good news.

Thanks be to God.

Announcements

In light of the current COVID-19 outbreak, **all meetings and worship services are taking place virtually.**

- Sunday [Video Devotions](#) are on our [YouTube Channel](#). Please subscribe and comment.
- German [Radio Devotions](#) on our website and Sundays at 9.30 am on CHLO Radio AM 530
- [Virtual Sunday Coffee Hour](#) at 11:00 am through Zoom
- [Sunday School lessons](#) and [Fabulous Fridays](#) on our website
- [Virtual Coffee Shop Talk](#), Mondays 7:00-9:00 pm through Zoom led by Vicar Silke Fahl
- [Virtual Prayer Circle](#), Wednesdays 5:30-6:00 pm through Zoom led by Solveig Christina Voss; we also have a Prayer Request Wall in the Church Foyer
To request a prayer or join our prayer circle, email prayers@martinluther.ca.
- [Corona-Care Calls](#)- Volunteers are continuing to call you with more information and to understand your needs. Let us know if you'd like to join the call team!
- [Virtual Dinner Church](#) through Zoom, May 13 at 7:00 pm
- Ascension of our Lord / Christihimmelfahrt, May 21:
11:00 am German-language virtual reflection, prayer and conversation through Zoom led by Pastor Katharina Moeller (St. George's Church) and Pastor Ralph Carl (First Lutheran Church). Call 647- 558-0588 and enter 401 273 968 (Meeting ID)
5:30 pm Virtual Evening Prayer in English through Zoom hosted by First Lutheran Church
- Please phone or email the church office:
 - ◇ if we can help you in any way
 - ◇ if you'd like to volunteer by doing Sunday readings, spring cleaning and growing seeds
 - ◇ with feedback on what we're offering
 - ◇ to support our church and [donate](#). Best ways are PAR or send cheque to church office

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*Member of Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) &
Partnered with Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland (EKD)*

