

ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH



daily devotions
FOR DISTANCED DISCIPLES

Thursday, May 7 —Wednesday, May 13, 2020

Dear Distanced Disciples of St. Mark's,

Life with a new puppy is wonderful. And exhausting.

In trying to create a routine for Wally to learn when to sleep and where (really, where not) to relieve himself and the like, I've been reminded of how important routine is to my daily life. Setting a time and place each day to read God's Word and pray is something that has been difficult as "normal" life has been disrupted by COVID-19, but keeping these practices of discipleship consistent has given me great comfort in these times of uncertainty.

In this document you will find a weeks worth of scripture lessons, reflection questions, activities, and internet resources based on the lectionary texts from the upcoming Sunday. The internet resources contain clickable links to easily access worship services, fellowship opportunities, and other material. **Families with kids—see page 4 for information about an At Home Sunday School video!** I invite you to find a new routine of prayer and reflection in your daily life with Christ!

In Easter joy,

Deacon Katie



Thursday, May 7



Scripture

Psalm 31: 1-5; 15-16

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

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

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.

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

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

My times are in your hand;

Rescue me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who persecute me.

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



Reflect

When was in a time in your life that God was your refuge? What comfort and strength did your faith or the faith of others give you in a time of trial?

How can you put your life and self in God's hands today? What is something that is holding you "captive" that God's love and mercy can release you from?



Prayer

O God, you are the stronghold in our lives. You provide comfort and strength that the world cannot give. Keep us close to you in our times of trial, and help us to recognize your presence and activity in the world today. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.



Activity

Spend a few moments in silence and meditation looking at your hands. Reflect on all the tasks they undertake, and think about what it might mean to be in the safety of God's hands forever.

For kids: Our Psalm today says that God is like a strong tower. Build a tower today and remember how strong God is! Use blocks or books or anything else you might have around your house. See how high you can make it!



Internet Resources

Faith and Fellowship—tonight on Zoom at 6pm. Join us for a time of conversation and prayer.

[Click here](#) at 6pm to join the Zoom meeting.

Friday, May 8



Scripture

1 Peter 2: 2-8

Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation—if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good. Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God’s sight, and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in scripture: “See, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.” To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe, “The stone that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner,” and “A stone that makes them stumble, and a rock that makes them fall.” They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.



Reflect

The brick masons have been hard at work lately building a physical house for God’s people at St. Mark’s. **You are a living stone, and part of the living body of Christ.**

What “pure, spiritual milk” are you longing for these days? How can you continue to nourish your faith while we practice social distancing?



Prayer

Holy God, you provide nourishment for our bodies and our souls. Help us to seek out that spiritual milk to strengthen us in our journey of faith, so that we might be mighty living stones in your kingdom here on earth. In Jesus’ name we pray, Amen.



Activity

Enjoy cooking today and think about the nourishment it provides to your body, and how practicing discipleship nourishes your faith. Try a new recipe or an old family favorite!

For kids: Paint rocks today and remember that you are a living stone!



Internet Resources

Every Friday at 10:00am, St. Mark’s kids gather on Zoom to sing, talk, and pray! [Click here](#) to join the Zoom meeting.



Saturday, May 9



Scripture

1 Peter 2: 9-10

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.



Reflect

In your baptism, God called and claimed you as God's own.

Either in words or deeds, how do you proclaim God's mighty acts of mercy, love, and forgiveness?



Prayer

Almighty God, you abound in mercy and love for your people. You have made us to be your Holy people, and call us to proclaim all you have done. Help us to embody your mercy and love, and be living examples of you in the world. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.



Activity

Remember your Baptism today! Water is all around us—sinks, bathtubs, puddles, and garden hoses are all great opportunities to reflect (and play!) as we remember the gifts God has given to us in Baptism.



Internet Resources

For kids: Family Sunday School from Sparkhouse! [Click here](#) for an awesome video Sunday School based on this week's lectionary readings.



Scripture

John 14: 1-14

Sunday, May 10

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."



Reflect

Do not let your hearts be troubled. God has a place prepared for you!

Reflect on what it means that Jesus is "the way, the truth, and the life."



Prayer

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.



Internet Resources

Worship with St. Mark's on Facebook today at 10:00am. [Click here](#) to access the streamed worship service, beginning with prelude music around 9:50.

Adult Faith Formation takes place at 9:00am on Zoom. [Click here](#) to join Pastor Matt as he leads a class about the Holy Lands.

Monday, May 11



Scripture

Psalm 102: 1-17

Hear my prayer, O Lord: let my cry come to you.

Do not hide your face from me in the day of my distress.

Incline your ear to me; answer me speedily in the day when I call.

For my days pass away like smoke, and my bones burn like a furnace.



Reflect

Days while practicing social distancing can seem to “pass away like smoke.”

How are you in conversation in God through prayer during this time? What needs are you making known to God?



Prayer

O God, you hear your people when we cry out to you. Open our mouths and hearts to be in holy conversation with you, knowing that you incline your ear to hear us. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.



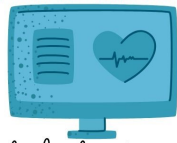
Activity

Consider using your St. Mark's directory to mark the days and pray for your church family. Each day pray for a different person in the directory and put the date by their name.



Internet Resources

Faith and Fellowship—this morning at 10:00am on Zoom. Join us for a time of conversation and prayer. [Click here](#) to join the meeting.



Tuesday, May 12



Scripture

Proverbs 3: 5-12

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the lord, and turn away from evil. It will be a healing for your flesh and a refreshment for your body. Honor the Lord with your substance and with the first fruits of all your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine. My child, do not despise the Lord's discipline or be weary of his reproof, for the Lord reproves the ones he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights.



Reflect

“Honor the Lord with your substance and with the first fruits of all your produce.”

Reflect on all that God has given you. In faith and trust, how can you share the first fruits, not just the leftovers?



Prayer

Holy God, you provide for our every need. Help us to share the gifts that you have given to us, whether in our money or gifts and talents, so that your work might be done through us. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.



Activity

Consider using your gifts to bless others today. Either with your money or talents, give your first fruits to others to the Glory of God.



Wednesday, May 13



Scripture

Acts 17: 22-31

Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, "Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, 'To an unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us. For 'In him we live and move and have our being'; as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we too are his offspring.' Since we are God's offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."



Reflect

We are reminded in our reading from Acts today that God does not live in shrines made by human hands. We have been reminded as we have not been able to worship at St. Mark's that God is always with us, not just at Church. Where do you feel close to God?



Prayer

Holy God, open our eyes to the beauty of the world that you have created. Help us to find sanctuaries all around us to worship you in our daily lives, and be in your presence. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.



Internet Resources

Join your St. Mark's family for Evening Prayer tonight on Facebook!

[Click here](#) to worship with us at 7:00pm