

ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH



daily devotions
FOR DISTANCED DISCIPLES

Wednesday April 22—Tuesday, April 28, 2020

Dear Distanced Disciples of St. Mark's,

In this season of social distancing, we are learning new ways to daily live out our faith. Daily Devotions for Distanced Disciples is a tool prepared for you to continue to grow in faith at home. I encourage you to find a predictable time in your day to make use of this resource to spend time in God's word and reflect on God's promises.

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 5 for information about an At Home Sunday School video!**

It is my plan to make these daily devotions available each week for as long as we are physically separated from one another. May it be a blessing to your life in Christ, and a comfort knowing that we are growing in faith together while apart.

In Easter joy,

Deacon Katie



daily devotions
FOR DISTANCED DISCIPLES

Wednesday, April 22



Scripture

Acts 2:14a, 22-32

Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed [the crowd], "Therefore let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified."

Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, "Brothers, what should we do?" Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him." And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added.



Reflect

During the Season of Easter, our Old Testament lessons are replaced with readings from the Book of Acts. In this book, we hear about the lives of the earliest disciples of Jesus, and what happened after they witnessed their resurrected Lord.

Peter reminds us that the promises of Baptism "are for those who are far away." How are you remembering your baptism today as we practice social distancing?



Prayer

Holy God, as your Son was raised to new life, grant your people new life this season of Easter. Remind us today and always of the new life we received in our baptism, and that you call us by name, no matter where we are, to live out our lives in service to you for the sake of the world. 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



Thursday, April 23



Scripture

Psalm 116: 1-4, 12-19

I love the Lord, who has heard my voice, and listened to my supplication, for the Lord has given ear to me whenever called. The cords of death entangled me; the anguish of the grave came upon me; I came to grief and sorrow. Then I called upon the name of the Lord: "O Lord, I pray to you, save my life." How shall I repay the Lord for all the good things God has done for me? I will lift the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord. I will fulfill my vows to the Lord in the presence of all God's people. Precious in your sight, O Lord, is the death of your servants. O Lord, truly I am your servant; I am your servant, the child of your handmaid; You have freed me from my bonds. I will offer you the sacrifice of thanksgiving and call upon the name of the Lord. I will fulfill my vows to the Lord in the presence of all God's people, in the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of you, O Jerusalem. Hallelujah!



Reflect

In prayer we call out to God with supplications, knowing that God always hears our cries for mercy. What needs of body, mind, and spirit are you making known to God today?



Prayer

O God, we cry out with the psalmist "O Lord, I pray to you, save my life." Give us strength to endure the pain and trails of this life. Grant health to those who are sick, wholeness to those who are broken, and peace to those who are dying. In all things, remind us of your steadfast love for us and all creation. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.



Activity

Consider starting a prayer list or journal. Writing down and revisiting your list of prayers can be a helpful practice in prayer.



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, April 24



Scripture

1 Peter 1: 17-23

¹⁷If you invoke as Father the one who judges all people impartially according to their deeds, live in reverent fear during the time of your exile. ¹⁸You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold, ¹⁹but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without defect or blemish. ²⁰He was destined before the foundation of the world, but was revealed at the end of the ages for your sake. ²¹Through him you have come to trust in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are set on God.

²²Now that you have purified your souls by your obedience to the truth so that you have genuine mutual love, love one another deeply from the heart. ²³You have been born anew, not of perishable but of imperishable seed, through the living and enduring word of God.



Reflect

As people born anew in Baptism, how are you “loving one another deeply from the heart?”

In a world that is ever changing, how does the living and enduring Word of God bring you comfort?



Prayer

Good and gracious God, your love never changes, and your living Word endures from generation to generation. Help us embody your Word and love our neighbor with Christ like love. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.



Activity

St. Mark's is currently collecting item for the food pantry at Living Waters in Cherokee. Add the items found in this weeks MiniMarks email to your grocery list as a way to “love one another deeply” this week.



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, April 25



Scripture

Luke 24:13-27

13Now on that same day [when Jesus had appeared to Mary Magdalene,] two [disciples] were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, 14and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. 15While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, 16but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. 17And he said to them, “What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?” They stood still, looking sad. 18Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?” 19He asked them, “What things?” They replied, “The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, 20and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. 21But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. 22Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, 23and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. 24Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him.” 25Then he said to them, “Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! 26Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?” 27Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.



Reflect

Our reading today is the first part of the Gospel text for this Sunday. After Jesus rose from the dead, he appeared to two disciples on the road to Emmaus.

How has Jesus appeared to you in your journey? Where in your life has you seen God active and present?



Prayer

O God, you walk alongside us in our pain and grief. Open our eyes when they are kept from recognizing you on our journey. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.



Internet Resources

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

Sunday, April 26



Scripture

Luke 24:28-35

28As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. 29But they urged him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.” So he went in to stay with them. 30When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. 31Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. 32They said to each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?” 33That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. 34They were saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!” 35Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.



Reflect

Christ is Risen! Christ is Risen, indeed. Alleluia!

“That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem.” Upon realizing Jesus as their resurrected Lord, the disciples got up and shared the news that Jesus was alive. How are you being a witness to Jesus’ resurrection this season of Easter?



Activity

In our Gospel reading this week, the eyes of the disciples are opened, and they were finally able to recognize Jesus. They able to see what was right in front of them. Play a game of Pictionary today with your family (or on Zoom with those far away!) as you remember how Jesus revealed himself in the breaking of the bread. Write down clues on slips of paper, and take turns drawing and guessing what is trying to be revealed!



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 has he leads a new class starting this week!

Monday, April 27



Scripture

Psalm 134

Come, bless the LORD, all you servants of the LORD,
who stand by night in the house of the LORD!

Lift up your hands to the holy place,
and bless the LORD.

May the LORD, maker of heaven and earth,
bless you from Zion



Reflect

The prayer of Psalm 134 is a good reminder to give thanks as we recognize all that God has given to us. As you “bless the Lord” today, for what are you giving thanks to God ?



Prayer

O God, we bless you and give you thanks for the abundance of gifts you daily give to us. Help us to use your gifts to bless others, in Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.



Activity

As you eat dinner tonight, share with your family, or with a loved one via phone or internet, something that you are thankful to God for today.



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, April 28



Scripture

1 Peter 2:1-3

Rid yourselves, therefore, of all malice, and all guile, insincerity, envy, and all slander. 2 Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation— 3 if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.



Reflect

In this season of social distancing, we find ourselves longing for the spiritual support and community of a physically gathered congregation. What is something that you miss about being able to be physically present at St. Mark's? What are you looking forward to when we are able to gather again in person?



Prayer

O God, we indeed have tasted and seen that the Lord is good! As we long for the spiritual milk that is your physically gathered people, sustain us with your word and with the ways we are still able to gather and connect. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.



Activity

Pull out your St. Mark's directory and connect with someone you haven't spoken to while we have been practicing social distancing. Give a call, send a text, or write a message to remind someone that they are loved!