

Bethel Worship Guide – April 19, 2020

Peace verse – John 14:27

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.
I do not give to you as the world gives.
Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.”

Light a candle in your worship space to represent the peace of Christ in your midst today.

Prelude: Don't be afraid – by John Bell – Sing the Journey #105

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R5ml5RsD7jE>

Don't be afraid. My love is stronger, my love is stronger than your fear.
Don't be afraid. My love is stronger and I have promised, promised to be always near.

Call to worship:

Leader: Jesus taught us to love, and he said,

“For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.”

All: We are two. We are three. We are one.

L: Jesus healed the sick, and he said, “Abide in me as I abide in you.”

All: We are four. We are five. We are one.

L: Jesus called the world to work for justice, to love mercy.

All: We are thousands. We are millions. We are one.

L: Jesus came to show us that we are not alone.

All: We are together. We are connected. We are one. Thanks be to God!¹

Song: Alleluia! Give the glory – Sing the Story #93

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ogP9cbqk1s>

Chorus: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Give the glory and the honor to the Lord!

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Give the glory and the honor to the Lord!

V.1. Where two or three are gathered in my name,
there I am in the midst of them; there I'll be.

Offering: Consider what you will offer to God this week.

God our creator, I offer you my praise. I offer you my heart.

I offer you my money. I offer you my life.

Thank you for everything you give to me. Amen.²

Scriptures: John 20:19-22, and John 21:1-14

Link: https://youtu.be/vW_65vwKxcA (the link offers a visual illustration to go along with the first reading. Created for MC USA convention 2019 worship.)

Questions for Scripture reflection:

¹ Bailey-Dyck, Matthew. Posted on ambs.edu April 13, 2020. (adapted)

² Hymnal Worship Book #748

1. The phrase Jesus says most often to his disciples in his first appearances to them after the resurrection is "*Peace be with you.*" (See John 20:19, 21, 26. Luke 24:36. In Matt 28:10 "Do not be afraid.")).
 - A) Why do you think he greeted them that way? What did he mean by it?
 - B) Close your eyes for a minute and hear Jesus speak those words to you. (Try hearing it as a sentence, or slowly, one word at a time.) Notice how your heart responds.
2. John 20:21 records that when the risen Jesus appeared to the disciples in the locked room, he gave them a mission, saying, "*As the Father has sent me, so I send you.*" Reflect on what you know about God's act of sending Jesus (ex: John 3:16-17), and what "*so I send you*" means now for us as followers of Jesus.
3. In 20:22, Jesus "*breathed on them*" (divine breath gives life; compare to Gen. 2:7) and said, "*Receive the Holy Spirit.*" I'm not sure I had previously noticed that this appears to describe the giving of the Holy Spirit that Jesus had promised earlier (see John 14:15-17; 15:26). It made me wonder if this is the author of John's way of describing the event of Pentecost (which of course is described differently in the book of Acts). In any case, Jesus didn't just give believers a mission (20:21), he also gave them the Holy Spirit to empower and guide them in that mission. A) Talk about or describe how the Holy Spirit has enabled you to pursue God's mission. B) Recall a time when you felt the Holy Spirit guiding the life/ministry of Bethel.
4. If you were to paint a picture based on John 21:1-14, what aspect of the story would you want to highlight? What part of the story is your eye or heart drawn to? (For example, a facial expression or emotion, an action, certain objects, a word or phrase, etc.)
5. In the first days and weeks after the resurrection, Peter and the other disciples still feel some disorientation and confusion – "now what?" It's human nature to want to return to what is familiar. Peter turns to his previous pattern of fishing. I've heard people (including myself) wonder when the unusual conditions we are in will end and things "get back to normal." I've also been reflecting a lot on what "normal" is for me and others, and wondering "which parts of normal are worth rushing back to" (a quote I referred to last Sunday). Perhaps simple living, generosity, deep listening, collaboration and restorative justice could become new norms in our community? Are there parts of what is considered 'normal' (personally, or in church, or in society) that should change? That you'd be willing to let go of? What new norms do you feel called to help create?
6. The disciples fished all night but caught nothing. In the morning, Jesus said to them, "*Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some.*" (21:6). What the disciples were doing wasn't working – for who knows what reason! Jesus invited them to try a different way. Have you ever heard Jesus tell you to do something differently? For example, to try a new approach to a problem? Or to see a different perspective on a situation or scripture passage? Was that easy or difficult for you? Why? What was the result?
7. Imagine yourself sitting around the fire having breakfast with Jesus (John 21:12-13). What do you learn or observe about the character of Jesus/God in this scene?

Affirmation of faith – Philippians 2:5-11

Have the same frame of mind in you that was also in Christ Jesus.

He existed in the form of God,

but he did not consider equality with God something to exploit.

Instead he emptied himself, assuming the form of a slave.

He was born in the image of a human being;

and being found in the design of a human being, he humbled himself,

and he became obedient unto death, even death on a cross.

Therefore God lifted him high

and granted freely to him the name above every name,

so that in the name of Jesus every knee would bend,

in heaven, on earth, under the earth,

and every tongue consent that Jesus Christ is Lord – to the glory of God the Father.³

Song: Christ who left his home in glory – Hymnal Worship Book #283

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lhyR9rDS7CM>

V.1. Christ who left his home in glory, and upon the cross was slain,
now is risen! O tell the story that the Savior lives again.

Chorus: Hail him! Hail him! Tell the story.

Hail! All hail! Jesus lives forever more.

V.2. While the world in peace was sleeping, early on that Easter day,
came the faithful women, weeping, but the stone was rolled away.

V. 3. Christ, our loving mediator, now with God for you and me intercedes,
and our Creator hears and answers every plea.

Intercessory Prayer: you are invited to offer your own prayers now, and/or join the Bethel group sharing and prayer time at 11:00 am by calling or logging in to GoToMeeting.

Song: Christ is risen! Shout hosanna – H #272 (FYI, link has a different tune than in hymnbook)

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MVNVHOqJOjo>

Christ is risen! Shout hosanna! Celebrate this day of days.

Christ is risen! Hush in wonder, all creation is amazed.

In the desert all surrounding, see, a spreading tree has grown.

Healing leaves of grace abounding, bring a taste of love unknown.

Christ is risen! Raise your spirits from the caverns of despair.

Walk with gladness in the morning. See what love can do and dare.

Drink the wine of resurrection, not a servant, but a friend;

Jesus is our strong companion – joy and peace shall never end.

Christ is risen! Earth and heaven never-more shall be the same.

Break the bread of new creation where the world is still in pain.

³ This translation prepared by Mary H. Schertz. *Take Our Moments and Our Days*, Herald Press, 2010.

Tell its grim, demonic chorus, "Christ is risen! Get you gone!"
God, the First and last, is with us. Sing hosanna, everyone!

Benediction:

As Christ burst forth from the tomb,
may new life burst forth from us
and show itself in acts of love and healing to a hurting world.
And may that same Christ,
who lives forever and is the source of our new life,
keep your hearts rejoicing
and grant you peace this day and always. Amen.⁴

⁴ Mark, Arlene M., *Words for Worship 1*. Herald Press, #52.