

“Kept in Our Hearts”

Sixth Sunday of Easter

May 17, 2020



We continue with our Easter Season because Easter isn't just one day. This week we are invited to keep Jesus' commandments—to love one another is to keep each other in our hearts. Every week we remind ourselves why we gather. We are forming a habit of spending time together, breaking bread together, praising God together and having goodwill for all the people. In the account of the early church, they did just that:

*“Day by day, as they **spent much time together** in the temple, they **broke bread at home** and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, **praising God and having the goodwill** of all the people.” ACTS 2: 46-47A*

We create a “temple” of worship in our hearts that connects us across boundaries, distance and time. But as we share this worship, we will stay connected. At the “heart of the matter,” we are connected through the Spirit that makes us one in love.

Prepare

Rock, stone, or worry stone...Candle...Breakfast—bread, wine, cereal, cookie, milk.

Welcome - Announcements

Opening Act of Centering Our Hearts as One

I invite you to take a deep breath and place your hand on your heart;
let's lightly tap together in a slow heartbeat rhythm.

Holy Living God, Heartbeat of Creation,
help us to take this time to center on you,
for you made us, you gave us life,
and you continue to be with us
every moment...every breath...every step.
We speak together this assurance from God:

**Be still, O heart, you're not alone, your beat is shared with me.
Come Now, and calm, and center here, you're mine secure and free.**

Pick up our heart stone, sometimes called a “worry stone,”
its surface reminds us that God's touch
is within us, between us, and around us.
As close and real as this stone is in our hands right now,
is how close Love is to us always.

Imagine letting go of our worries for now releasing them into God's heart of love.

**Into your care, we offer now, our worries, fears and strife.
We turn to you and know you're near – Your light, our love and life.**

We light our candles now and set our heart worry stones or rock next to it.
Light the candle(s) you have on your table and put your stone(s) around the base of it.

MUSIC: You Are Mine

***"I will come to you in the silence, I will lift you from all your fear.
You will hear my voice, I claim you as my choice.***

Be still and know I am here.

***I am hope for all who are hopeless, I am eyes for all who long to see.
In the shadows of the night, I will be your light.***

Come and rest in me.

Do not be afraid, I am with you. I have called you each by name.

Come and follow me, I will bring you home;

I love you and you are mine."

Break Bread - Blessing the Meal

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS:

Forgive us, Lord

**when we are struggling with life, searching for answers in vain,
relying on our own strength and failing again.**

**Remind us, Lord that you are the strength
upon whom we can call, the power to endure,
the answer that we seek, the one in whose arms
we can safely fall. Forgive us, Lord when we forget.**

Each one of us, all of us, have received God's mercy in Christ.

Forgiven, redeemed, made whole - we are a people made one in faith.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION *(together)*

***In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples,
saying: Take and eat; this is my body,
given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.***

***Again, after supper, he took the cup,
gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink,
saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.***

LORD'S PRAYER *(together)*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Leader: We keep all our friends in our hearts. We keep hope in our hearts. We keep gratitude in our hearts. That is the heart of the message today. Let us bless our meal by praying this "repeat after me prayer"...

God, Our Host

God, Our Host, *(continue to repeat the next lines in this way)*

We gather in your name...

invited by Jesus...

bound together with your Spirit...

in union with each other...

Feed our bodies and our spirits...

with your comforting presence...

so that we might be your comfort to others...

Bless this food...

and break open our hearts...

Bless this drink...

and pour out your love...

Amen...

And now I invite you to pick something (bread and wine) from the table and let us say the one word that is at the heart of the matter in every blessing we do at our tables, repeating after me...

(with gusto)

"Grateful!"

"Grateful!"

Let us begin to "break bread" while we "break open the Word" in our scriptures.

Begin to serve & eat, even breakfast, as the next scriptures & thoughts are shared

Breaking Open the Word with Scripture

Leader: The resurrected Jesus tells his disciples that the Spirit will be with them when he is gone.

Reader: "If you love me and obey the command I give you, I will ask the One who sent me to give you another [Companion], another Helper to be with you always—the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot accept since the world neither sees nor recognizes... but you can recognize the Spirit because the Spirit remains with you and will be within you."

I won't leave you orphaned; I will come back to you. A little while now and the world will see no more; but you'll see me; because I live, and you will live as well. On that day you'll know that I am in God, and you are in me, and I am in you.

Those who obey my commandments are the ones who love me, and those who love me will be loved by Abba God. I, too, will love them and will reveal myself to them." - JOHN 14: 15-21 (INCLUSIVE BIBLE TRANSLATION)

Leader: Doing the "right thing" is something we try hard to do. Sometimes doing the right thing is difficult and means that we make sacrifices to make sure we do not harm others. We do it because love is the commandment we live by. In this excerpt from an early church letter, we hear the apostle encourage the people to always be ready to share from their hearts about the source of hope that is in them—Jesus Christ.

Reader: Now who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good? But even if you do suffer for doing what is right, you are blessed. Do not fear what they fear, and do not be intimidated, but in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and reverence. - 1 PETER 3:13-16A

Leader: How do we "sanctify Christ as Lord" in our hearts? To "sanctify" something is to set it apart as holy. Holiness resides within each one of us. It calls us to see holiness in others. It calls us to do the right thing in the name of Love, even when the right thing isn't easy. Sometimes the right thing, and the hardest thing, is to follow the commandment to love our neighbor as ourselves. We often focus about loving our neighbor, but we also must hear the second part... love ourselves. The Spirit is in us, Jesus says, and to love ourselves is to love God, to love the Jesus in each of us, and to love the Spirit that is our Companion and Helper.

Action Response

Leader: I invite you to turn to someone (now or after worship if you are alone right now), and remind them that you love them, God loves them, and we hope they are giving some love to themselves too! Because it is the right thing to do!

Breaking Open our Lives with Discussion

Leader: Our theme scripture says, "*they ate their food with glad and generous hearts.*" One way we can be glad and generous is to share about how we are finding strength, hope, love and peace in these days. This is part of "breaking bread" with each other as we break open our hearts to one another as well. In this week's scripture, we are encouraged to obey Christ's commands, which is to love God, to love neighbor, and to love ourselves.

What have you done lately to honor the holy in you—
to love yourself, and take care of yourself?

Have you witnessed people doing the right thing for others?
Or if you can't think of something from this week,
what do you have in your memory as something or someone
that showed the Christ in them?

Let's take some time at our tables to talk about these questions.

Let's take some time at your table to talk or journal about these questions.

*"Let's complete this sentence, "I honor the holy in me by taking care of myself
(in/when/where) _____."*

Breaking Open our Hearts with Prayer

Leader: It is difficult in this moment not to be near some of the people we love and might be worried about. Take a moment and say out loud the names of people you wish were right there next to you at your table today. As we name them, they are present with us in our hearts.

Compassionate God,
we pray for vulnerable people all over this world,
people without power
who live in places of terror and violence, fear, and oppression.

Protect them, God;
we feel so powerless ourselves to help them.
Encourage and empower us to work
for peace and freedom from fear in our own contexts.
Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

God of grace,
we pray for those whose lives have been turned upside down
by various disasters: floods, fire, fear of a pandemic and drought-driven famine.
Bring courage and hope to all;
through their pain, may they remain connected to you in prayer.

We pray for those who say there is no God;
may we through the living of our own lives
demonstrate the joy and peace of a Spirit-centered existence.
Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

God of community,
we pray for our own congregation;
may we be a source of hope for our neighborhood.

Help us to discern needs and work to fulfill them.
Strengthen and unify our congregation
and show us how we can be the disciples you envision us to be.
Return the sick to health and well-being especially _____
and relieve the suffering of those who have lost loved ones,
are unable to find meaningful employment
and fear the challenges of old age.
Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Guide us, God of Healing,
To always put our future in your hands and know your saving faithful love.
In Jesus' name we pray, **Amen.**

Blessing of our Graduates

Please join me in lifting your hands in a blessing for all 2020 graduates.

Reading from Joshua 9 (The Message)

“All your life, no one will be able to hold out against you. In the same way I was with Moses, I’ll be with you. I won’t give up on you; I won’t leave you. Strength! Courage! You are going to lead this people to inherit the land that I promised to give their ancestors. Give it everything you have, heart and soul. Make sure you carry out The Revelation that Moses commanded you, every bit of it. Don’t get off track, either left or right, so as to make sure you get to where you’re going. And don’t for a minute let this Book of The Revelation be out of mind. Ponder and meditate on it day and night, making sure you practice everything written in it. Then you’ll get where you’re going; then you’ll succeed. Haven’t I commanded you? Strength! Courage! Don’t be timid; don’t get discouraged. GOD, your God, is with you every step you take.”

2020 KWHS Graduates - Members of First Lutheran

*Julianna Boyum, Thomas Haasnoot, Megan Mattson,
Shelby Noah, Ally Peterson, Madison Thompson.*

Praise God!

It is time to praise God and raise our endorphin levels to improve our heart-health, both physically and spiritually! So whether your “dance” is in your bed, in your chair, or all over the living room, it’s time for the Easter Season Dance Party! If you are going to dance standing up, go ahead and get ready. And let’s start with this affirmation, repeating after me (*with some energy!*)

We know Jesus is present among us... *[repeat]*
even in this very home... *[repeat]*

We will not let fear be louder than love... *[repeat]*
but with glad hearts and rejoicing souls... *[repeat]*
we will sing God’s praise... *[repeat]*
for we are Easter People! ...*[repeat]*

Have Goodwill

That was great! I hope you feel some good vibes right now. So while we have our energy up, let’s decide to send some energy out to the world that needs it! What message does the world need? Perhaps you will decide to create a way to let more and more people know the message of Christ, “You are not alone. I am here. And my Spirit is your Helper!” What can we do to create more love in our household, in our family, in our relationships with those we cannot be with right now? How can we offer our hearts to those who are working so hard right now? How can we tell others that we have hope?

How about holding people in our hearts by making a large heart out of whatever paper you have on hand. Fill the heart with the names of people you keep in your heart. This is a good time to talk with family or friends about the people you are missing and hope to see when we are back together after we've been in quarantine. Take a photo of the heart and send it to the people you have named to remind them that you hold them in love.

MUSIC: You Are Mine

***"I am strength for all the despairing, healing for the ones who dwell in shame.
All the blind will see, the lame will all run free,
and all will know my name.
I am the Word that leads all to freedom, I am the peace the world cannot give.
I will call your name, embracing all your pain.
Stand up, now walk and live!
Do not be afraid, I am with you. I have called you each by name.
Come and follow me, I will bring you home;
I love you and you are mine."***

Blessing - Based on Psalm 16



As we close this time together, remember:
God is always with you. No matter what you face,
no matter what trials or hardships come your way,
God is right beside you, whispering
"Peace be with you,"
guiding and directing your path.
So do not live in fear, but in joy.
Take heart! This is the heart of the matter.
Amen.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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PARTICIPANTS

Pastor Julie Rogness, Intern Pastor Patty Bjorklund; Carmen Nesseth-Youth & Family Coordinator
Musical Offering-Tanya Short & Annette Thunhorst; Mission Control Tech Leadership-Jim Braaten

CONNECTING OPPORTUNITIES

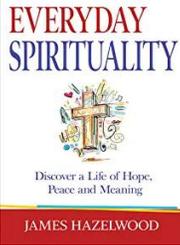
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REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Faye Marcuson, Ron Grose, Mary Ravlin Gould, Ken Wold, Barb Schaller, Lila Cole, Colette Flom, Stephen Berge, Jeannie Ellingson, Sid Strandemo.

***See - Upcoming Events, Next Page**

U P C O M I N G E V E N T S



**BOOK GROUP ON ZOOM:
EVERYDAY SPIRITUALITY**
*Discover a Life of Hope,
Peace & Meaning,*
by James Hazelwood,
former bishop,

We will meet at least three times toward the end of May. Please let Pastor Julie know if you would like to join the discussion.

**Honk & Wave
2020**

SUNDAY, MAY 17 at 11:00 a.m.
Join Us for Drive-By "Honk & Wave"
to honor the six 2020 KWHS grads
who are members of First Lutheran

The Students will be parked in the church parking lot facing west. At 11:00 church members, family & friends are invited to drive in the South Entrance of the parking lot, drive by, honk & wave to show support of the students, then exit out the north entrance.



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