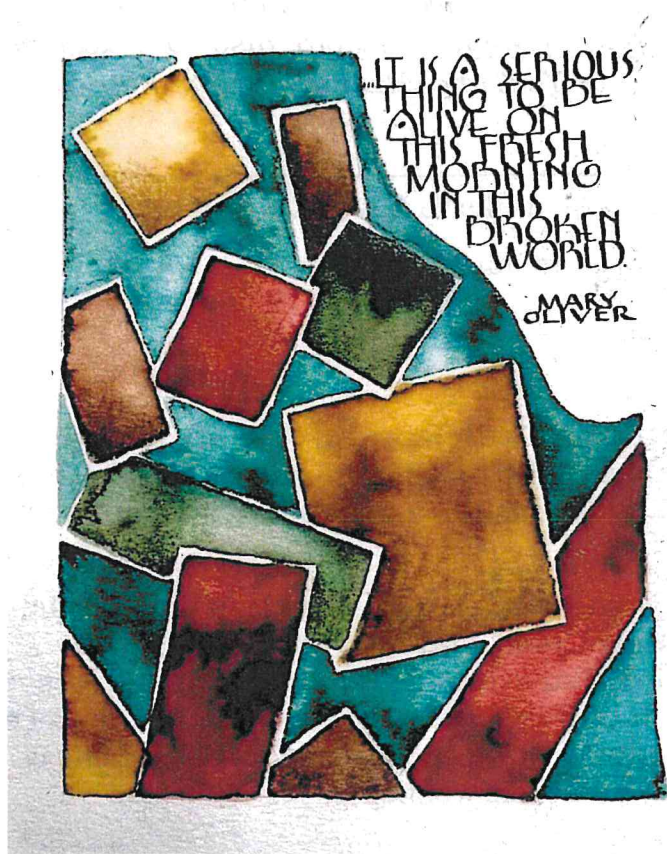


September 15, 2020

God bless you all, the family of Holy Cross! Can you believe this week we've lived through? I'm a little shocked, I admit. I wonder how we will categorize this week when we look back a few months from now? I shudder to think what the death toll will eventually be. What the total number of home and business losses will be? - HERE's our plan for worship, based on wildfire and air quality issues -

**NO worship in the Patio this week - INSTEAD - PATIO WORSHIP/PARKING LOT WORSHIP WILL BE HELD SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27<sup>TH</sup> AT 10 AM! Air quality is the reason for this delay. Thank you for understanding!**

I hope you are all safe, and I want to know how you are all doing. Please call, text or email me and let me know. Soon, ok? I'd like to just assume 'No news is good news' but I think that's foolhardy.



I include this quote from Mary Oliver today; one of my favorite poets. I am so glad to know you all, my friends. My prayers are with you all.

Some of you may be like me - a little too German sometimes - wishing I were young and strong and could go hand out water to firefighters or work with the crews in Mill City who dug firelines with tractors. But I'm not quite that able bodied. Maybe that's true for you. Please know that you still have something to contribute - prayers, certainly, money, surely. We are a few blocks at Holy Cross from one of the largest evacuation centers in Oregon. They are handling things well there.

**Give money if you can, volunteer to help if you're able. Here's the info -**

If individuals or groups are DROPPING OFF Donations please direct them to the Truitt Receiving Center at 1330 Front St Salem, OR 97301. It will be open

Monday-Friday from 9-5pm. Any volunteers that want to help should go to this site first.

If individuals or families are PICKING UP resources or supplies, please direct them to the Resource Hub at 1705 Silverton Rd NE Salem, OR 97301. It will be open Monday-Friday 10-5pm.

- The American Red Cross is coordinating monetary donations at [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org).
- The United Way is hosting a donation location for critical items for evacuees. Connect with them here: <https://www.unitedwaymww.org/>
- Marion Polk Food Share is providing food and water. Connect with them here: <https://www.marionpolkfoodshare.org/>

*This week, Sunday Sept 20<sup>th</sup>, Holy Cross has some great materials online to share – from the people at Lutherans Restoring Creation – and this week we will post a blog from Jeff Sargent about Holy Cross’ involvement with this focus! Watch for it on our website, [www.holycrosslutheran-salem.org](http://www.holycrosslutheran-salem.org), also our Facebook Page, Holy Cross Lutheran—Salem and our YouTube channel – Pastor Patricia Hughes*

And, here’s one more pastoral conversation I’d like to have with you –  
Folks, make the important things a priority in your lives.

The important things.

Like family, like health, like safety.

We are people who love Holy Cross Lutheran Church because we are about caring, and about service. We also happen to be people who gather for worship weekly in one way or another. And that sustains us, inspires us and equips us to care for others in Jesus’ name.

It seems to me that as people of God, we need to spend a little less time on the details of the building and upkeep of Holy Cross, and little more time on the wellbeing of our neighbors. Do you think that’s a radical thought? Spend less time on the ‘maintenance of our church building etc’? Well, think about it. Let’s talk about it in the days ahead. Let’s put our time and talents towards what is important in this life – people, families, and their wellbeing.

I pray for you daily,

Pastor Patricia Hughes+

My friend, Rev. Elizabeth Larson, from St. Mark's Lutheran in Portland, Oregon wrote this lament that I shared on Sunday, September 13, 2020 on our website and Facebook. Let's try it again, shall we?

### **Lament and Thanksgiving**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,

who creates, redeems, and sustains us and all of creation. Amen.

Let us bring before God all that grieves us and that for which we give thanks: The response will be Hear us O God.

The forests and grasslands are burning Hear us, God

The wild animals are fleeing or dying Hear us, God

Places dear to us are destroyed or in danger Hear us, God

Communities are uprooted and evacuated Hear us, God

Homes have vanished Hear us, God

Loved ones are missing, some are dead. Hear us, God

Our efforts to help are hampered by the virus and the air quality Hear us, God

We are beset by fear and troubled by falsehood Hear us, God

The most vulnerable among us have yet more burdens to bear Hear us, God

And yet, and yet.

People have opened up their homes, their barns, their pastures, their churches, their community centers for refugees of every species Thank you, God

The gathering places of the evacuated have been overwhelmed with donations Thank you, God

The first responders of all sorts have been working day and night for our safety Thank you, God

And more arrive every day from around our nation and our globe. Thank you, God

We have mapping and communication technology our grandparents could never have dreamed of Thank you, God

The dry east winds are over, and with that the worst fire weather conditions are done. Thank you, God

Marine air will be gradually working inland next few days, pushing the worst of the smoke out. Thank you, God

And chances for rain return early next week. Thank you, God

God hears the cries of all who call out in need,

May we rest in that love

And then, empowered by the truth of resurrection,

Go forth to wipe away the tears of all who hunger and thirst,

guided by the example of the same Jesus Christ

and led by the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen

-As we move through these days post – wildfire, may you each hold this week in your heart, giving you strength, giving you purpose – Pastor Patricia Hughes



## **Sermon for September 13, 2020 – God’s Work, Our Hands, Sunday.**

Well, Oregon is burning right now. As of this recording, I hear that 10 percent of our whole population is evacuated, and many many more are waiting for news to evacuate at a moments notice. I bet you’ve been praying a lot lately. I know I have. And praying can calm our hearts, and help us process. I think that’s really important. None of us are very good at stressful situations, but until we can find that calm center within us that clings to God, I am afraid we make stressful situations even worse with our anxiety and fear. That’s true in so many areas of life. It’s true with this Coronavirus epidemic we are experiencing. It’s true in interpersonal relationships.

I have been preaching on the old testament all summer, but this week, I Really want to talk about the gospel of Matthew. Its one of the hard stories (we recorded the readings separately, so stop this recording, and watch that first, will you? Or turn to Matthew 18:21-35 and read it over.

This passage is about Peter asking a question of Jesus, and he tells him a parable about forgiveness. Peter is a person who struggles with his own self importance, and Jesus speaks an important truth to him. The parable is about a man whose king forgives a huge debt that he had – so huge he would never have been able to repay it. The man is happy, and relieved, I am sure. But then, that man comes across someone who owes him money, and he doesn’t forgive, he ruthlessly condemns that person. Eventually the king finds out and punishes the first slave severely, because he doesn’t pass on the forgiveness he received. Well, this is something we need to hear right now. Because I think we all have awareness of Gods’ forgiveness of our sins. But, maybe in our heart of heart we never really feel worthy of that forgiveness so we cannot embody forgiveness, offering it to others. Do you ever see this happening? I do. I see it when I get testy with my neighbors over small things. I see it when the church attempts to find a new identity, offering love and compassion in new ways, but folks get tied up with the minutiae of life – and the new ways never really come about because of it.

Have you ever wondered why some folks or some organizations are able to do great things? I have. And one characteristic I see that they share is that they are able to hold themselves, lightly. To know just how sinful and messed up they are, but to feel how much God loves them. That makes you feel light doesn’t it? Like a burden is lifted? And then when complications come along, or worries and stress, those folks are able to let them roll off their back. No sweat. And the mission and ministry goes on. Don’t you think that relaxing, unclenching, and letting God’s love wash over you is the place to start? You really can do that. You have God’s permission. You have my permission. God is love, and the worst person you know you are in your heart is nothing like what God sees. God sees your clean, and holy self, the one God created, and the One God adores. <sup>21</sup>*Peter came and said to [Jesus], “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?”* <sup>22</sup>*Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times. And this is the part I would add – and God forgives you 7 times more than even that. Or 77 times more than even that. Feel that forgiveness of God today, friends, won’t you? That’s the part that changes things in this world.*

So, as you get out there ready to change the world, with your gifts, with your work, with your talent, please know – you are released to do this, released to change the world. Its not a burden, its not something you really need to ‘get right’. Just breathe. Rest in God’s embrace of forgiveness and the opportunity to work for God to change the world will be right there. You’ll be like Moses with his staff, who, when he relaxes, and trusts in God, can part the red sea and save his people. That’s you. That’s us. Start. By Breathing In God’s Love. Amen. Bless you – Pastor Patricia Hughes

**WORSHIPPING AT HOME WITH HOLY CROSS**  
**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2020 – SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER**  
**PENTECOST**

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,  
whose steadfast love is everlasting,  
whose faithfulness endures from generation to generation.

**Amen.**

Trusting in the mercy of God, let us confess our sin.

Reconciling God,

**we confess that we do not trust your abundance,  
and we deny your presence in our lives.**

**We place our hope in ourselves  
and rely on our own efforts.**

**We fail to believe that you provide enough for all.**

**We abuse your good creation for our own benefit.**

**We fear difference and do not welcome others  
as you have welcomed us.**

**We sin in thought, word, and deed.**

**By your grace, forgive us;**

**through your love, renew us;**

**and in your Spirit, lead us;**

**so that we may live and serve you in newness of life. Amen.**

Beloved of God,

by the radical abundance of divine mercy

we have peace with God through † Christ Jesus,

through whom we have obtained grace upon grace.

Our sins are forgiven.

Let us live now in hope.

For hope does not disappoint,

because God's love has been poured into our hearts

through the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

**GATHERING HYMN – On Our Way Rejoicing ELW 537**

1 On our way rejoicing  
gladly let us go. Christ our Lord has conquered;  
vanquished is the foe.  
Christ without, our safety;  
Christ within, our joy;  
who, if we be faithful,

can our hope destroy?

*Refrain*

On our way rejoicing;  
as we forward move,  
hearken to our praises,  
O blest God of love!

2 Unto God the Father  
joyful songs we sing;  
unto God the Savior  
thankful hearts we bring;  
unto God the Spirit  
bow we and adore,  
on our way rejoicing  
now and evermore. *Refrain*

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Almighty and eternal God, you show perpetual lovingkindness to us your servants. Because we cannot rely on our own abilities, grant us your merciful judgment, and train us to embody the generosity of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

**READINGS AND PSALM**

**Exodus 16:2-15**

*Manna and quails feed the Israelites in the wilderness*

**Psalms 145:1-8**

The LORD is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. (Ps. 145:8)

**Philippians 1:21-30**

*Standing firm in the gospel*

**Matthew 20:1-16**

*The parable of the vineyard workers*

**APOSTLES' CREED**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.\*  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,**

he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.

## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION** (see attached prayers)

### **OFFERING PRAYER**

God of goodness and growth,  
all creation is yours,  
and your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens.  
Water and word, wine and bread:  
these are signs of your abundant grace.  
Nourish us through these gifts,  
that we might proclaim your steadfast love  
in our communities and in the world,  
through Jesus Christ, our strength and our song. Amen.

### **THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

When our congregation gathered for the celebration of Holy Communion, we heard again the story of God's mighty acts and of the love shown us in the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. With thanksgiving we remembered that "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 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 all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me."

The people of our congregation were given assurance of our Lord's presence through the gift of his Holy Spirit. As you worship in your homes, we remember the gift of communion that we share.

Jesus said, "I am the bread of life, whoever comes to me shall never hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst."

***At this time, you may remember the gift of holy communion with your own bread and cup.***

**Communion Blessing** The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His grace. **Amen**

## COMMUNION BLESSING

God of the welcome table,  
in this meal we have feasted on your goodness  
and have been united by your presence among us.  
Empower us to go forth sustained by these gifts  
so that we may share your neighborly love with all,  
through Jesus Christ, the giver of abundant life. **Amen.**

**THE LORD'S PRAYER** Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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.**

## BLESSING

**LIFE IS SHORT  
AND WE DO NOT HAVE  
MUCH TIME TO  
GLADDEN  
THE HEARTS  
OF THOSE WHO  
TRAVEL WITH US  
SO BE SWIFT TO LOVE  
MAKE HASTE TO BE KIND  
AND GO IN PEACE  
TO LOVE AND SERVE  
THE LORD**

ALAN - FREDERIC AMIEL



**Praying together at Holy Cross – Sept 20, 2020**

**The season of “God’s Work: Our Hands”**

With open hands and open hearts, let us pray for the needs of all the world.

Generous Provider, renew the strength, energy and courage of your church. Through our acts of service, may your love overflow and your grace be proclaimed for us, for our neighbors and for all the world. God of abundant grace,



**Open your healing hands.**

Generous Provider, we celebrate the earth. We are cognizant of our friends and neighbors who are suffering from the fires in the West and the Hurricanes in the Gulf of Mexico. Be present Lord. God of abundant grace,

**Open your healing hands.**

Generous Provider, guide and provide leadership at this time for our cities, states and nation, as well as the nations of the world. God of abundant grace,

**Open your healing hands.**

Generous Provider, feed the hungry today. Let donations flow freely to those in need, let us be grateful to you, God for our daily bread. God of abundant grace,

**Open your healing hands.**

Generous Provider, you heal all diseases, comfort all sorrows, restore all things. Be present with those who suffer with illness. Give researchers great skill in creating treatments and preventatives for covid 19. God of abundant grace,

**Open your healing hands.**

Generous Provider, your love holds us in life and in death. Help us to come to terms with the great loss we feel in our world today, as so many have died. Help us to learn how to lament, and grieve together. God of abundant grace,

**Open your healing hands.**

We commend these and all things to your gracious care, trusting in Christ Jesus, our Savior. **Amen.**

**Join us on Zoom for Bible Study this week (no in person due to air quality)**

Patricia Hughes is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: What is God Saying today?

Time: Sep 17, 2020 05:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Weekly:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/tZAtcuyorzMqGtxkui9AsVV9vE\\_P9mKoFH5O/ics?icsToken=98tyKuGsrj4vGtWdsBmPRpwIAo\\_4Z\\_TzmFxfjbdFlwrsWgFAVDWvIMd9AutyO9f2](https://us02web.zoom.us/join/https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/tZAtcuyorzMqGtxkui9AsVV9vE_P9mKoFH5O/ics?icsToken=98tyKuGsrj4vGtWdsBmPRpwIAo_4Z_TzmFxfjbdFlwrsWgFAVDWvIMd9AutyO9f2)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84055018008?pwd=SlJHN0lkcWhlUVF3aWE4MkEzV1BRdz09>

Meeting ID: 840 5501 8008

Passcode: 569519

Here's our topics for the next few weeks:

Sept 17 – Exodus 16:2-15 (the miracle of manna)

Sept 24 – Exodus 17:1-17 (the miracle of water from rock)

October 1 – Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20 (The Ten Commandments)