

October 20, 2020

Worship. When you think of church you think of Worship don't you? Actually, the acts of service that a congregation does might be the very best demonstration of God's love, but Worship is right up there. Why? Because Worship fills us up! Worship is a way to 'come as you are' and be filled with the spirit.



Though we are not having congregational singing or spoken responses in worship, Holy Cross is finding ways to worship in these Covid Days. We worshipped on the patio all summer (every other week) and we have moved into the Gym for worship beginning October 11th. We have also decided to continue our drive up communion on an occasional basis because that is the MOST safe of all our worship options – no one leaves their car, and we all stay safe.

I have been wanting to get us back in our sanctuary in some way because I know it is meaningful to many of you, to see the space, hear music, and be able to pray. So we're going to try that out on November 1st (All Saints) from 12 to 1:30. We will have an usher letting 10 people at a time into the space, and musicians (no singers) playing organ and piano during this time. You will have the opportunity to pray (I'll have a devotional prepared for you or bring your own), light a candle for your loved ones, and leave a memento on our Ofrenda for Dia de Los Muertos. Being so close to the election, I am hopeful you might choose to pray for our country as well. I am thankful for the folks who are making this worship event possible.

As we have done since March, there are also 5 worship videos posted to Youtube (my channel is Pastor Patricia Hughes) as well as our website, www.holycrosslutheran-salem.org, and our Facebook page – Holy Cross Lutheran-Salem. These include readings, children's sermon, prayers, music and a sermon. You can worship every weekend using these tools.

So, take advantage of worship in one of these new forms, fill up your cup and stay focused on the Love of the Lord, won't you?

Here's the worship plan for the next few weeks –**Reformation Day - Sunday, Oct. 25th**
9:30 am worship in the gym (RSVP to 5033646041) Wear Red! *All Saints - Sunday, November 1st 12 – 1:30 devotional time in the sanctuary (10 people at a time) Bring pictures or mementos, light a candle for your loved ones. Pray for our nation. Sunday, November 8th*
9:30 am, Worship in the gym (RSVP to 5033646041) Sunday, November 15, 12 noon
Drive up communion – bring your own elements!

Looking forward to worshipping with you all! – Pastor Patricia+

Newsy things happening at Holy Cross – for October 20, 2020

Bible Study is shifting! “What is God Saying today?” is our focus ever since the pandemic hit, trying to find some footing for our worries and concerns. We meet Thursdays – at 12 noon in person (as long as that number stays under 8 we can do it safely in the skylight room) and at 5 pm on zoom. See you there. Patricia Hughes is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting. Topic: What is God Saying today?

October 22, 2020 John 8:31-36; October 29, 2020 Matthew 5:1-12; November 4 Matthew 25:1-13 – We’ll stay on the gospel until Advent and make a plan for going forward!)

Join Zoom Meeting

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

Meeting ID: 840 5501 8008 Passcode: 569519

Better Together Racial Justice Group meets on ZOOM **Wednesday, October 21, 2020 –6 pm! this** is a study of the book “White Fragility” – we’re on chapter 2. If you haven’t read the book you are still invited to come and listen to the conversation to see if you might be interested! Folks from St. Mark, Holy cross and Christ the Good Shepherd are involved. White Fragility Chapter 2 - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84759278812>

To Pastors, Congregation Leaders, Members and Communities:

You are invited!

Join us for the launch of the Oregon Synod Disaster Preparedness and Response Congregational Network

Thursday, October 29th, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. via Zoom

Bring Yourself – Bring a Fellow Member - Bring a Team!

To Register, email your name & congregation name

to beprepared@oregonsynod.org

The **OR Synod Disaster Preparedness & Response Network** will offer regular gatherings, resources, trainings, and team development activities to help you form a team and engage your congregation. Please join us as we begin the preparedness journey together! Disaster Response! We have all been touched by the disasters in our area (Covid, and wildfire). The Oregon Synod has been a lifeline with resources in these times. Join us on Thursday, Oct 29th for

WORSHIPPING AT HOME WITH HOLY CROSS
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2020 – REFORMATION SUNDAY
ELW SETTING THREE

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the Holy Trinity, One God, who creates, redeems and sustains us and all of creation. **Amen.**

Faithful God, have mercy on us. We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We turn from your loving embrace and go our own ways. We pass judgment on one another before examining ourselves. We place our own needs before those of our neighbors. We keep your gift of salvation to ourselves. Make us humble, cast away our transgressions, and turn us again to life in you through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen

God hears the cries of all who call out in need, and through his death and resurrection, Christ has made us his own. Hear the truth that God proclaims: Your sins are forgiven in the name of Jesus Christ. Let by the Holy Spirit, live in Freedom and newness to do God's work in the world with our own hands.

GATHERING HYMN – “A Mighty Fortress is our God” ELW 504

- 1 A mighty fortress is our God,
a sword and shield victorious;
he breaks the cruel oppressor's rod
and wins salvation glorious.
The old satanic foe
has sworn to work us woe!
With craft and dreadful might
he arms himself to fight.
On earth he has no equal.
- 2 No strength of ours can match his might!
We would be lost, rejected.
But now a champion comes to fight,
whom God himself elected.
You ask who this may be?
The Lord of hosts is he!
Christ Jesus, mighty Lord,
God's only Son, adored.
He holds the field victorious.

3 Though hordes of devils fill the land
all threat'ning to devour us,
we tremble not, unmoved we stand;
they cannot overpow'r us.
Let this world's tyrant rage;
in battle we'll engage!
His might is doomed to fail;
God's judgment must prevail!
One little word subdues him.

4 God's Word forever shall abide,
no thanks to foes, who fear it;
for God himself fights by our side
with weapons of the Spirit.
Were they to take our house,
goods, honor, child, or spouse,
though life be wrenched away,
they cannot win the day.
The kingdom's ours forever!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, gracious Lord, we thank you that your Holy Spirit renews the church in every age. Pour out your Holy Spirit on your faithful people. Keep them steadfast in your word, protect and comfort them in times of trial, defend them against all enemies of the gospel, and bestow on the church your saving peace, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

READINGS AND PSALM

Jeremiah 31:31-34

I will write my law in their hearts, says the LORD

Psalm 46

The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold. (Ps. 46:7)

Romans 3:19-28

Justified by God's grace as a gift

John 8:31-36

Jesus says, Continue in my word and you will know the truth

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

Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. You have set before us these gifts of your good creation. Prepare us for your heavenly banquet, nourish us with this rich food and drink, and send us forth to set tables in the midst of a suffering world through the bread of life, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. 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

The God of compassion, hope and joy,
Our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer,
Bless your feet to carry you into places of need.
Bless your lips to proclaim love and mercy.
Bless your heart to love and listen to those you encounter.
Bless your hands to care for the needs of your neighbors.
Bless you to be a blessing to others.

Now and always.

Amen.

Praying together at Holy Cross – October 25, 2020

Reformation Sunday

With confidence in God's grace and mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need. Renew and inspire the church in the freedom of the gospel, O God. Where the church is in error, reform it. Where the church speaks your truth, strengthen it. Where the church is divided, unify it. Ignite in us the working of the Holy Spirit.



God of abundant grace,

Open your healing hands.

As the earth changes, as mountains shake and the waters roar, may we care for this planet as a holy habitation for all living things. Sustain all peoples and lands recovering from natural disasters of any kind.

God of abundant grace,

Open your healing hands.

Guide areas of the world divided or traumatized by conflict, especially in our own land. Free all from slavery and human trafficking, and protect all in harm's way.

God of abundant grace,

Open your healing hands.

In this family of faith we give thanks for courageous voices that have remained firm in their commitment to the one who frees us from sin and death. Centered in your grace, unify us in the hope of the gospel.

God of abundant grace,

Open your healing hands.

Release those living in bondage to debts, chronic pain, or addiction. Grant healing touch to those who are ill, especially those struggling with the Covid-19 pandemic and its aftermath.

God of abundant grace,

Open your healing hands.

Even in death, you free us and give us a place in your house. We give thanks for our ancestors who have shown us truth and freedom, especially Martin Luther and those who work for the renewal of the church.

God of abundant grace,

Open your healing hands.

Listen as we call on you, O God, and enfold in your loving arms all for whom we pray, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Rock of Ages – Sermon for Oct 18, 2020 We've hit bumps in the road before, haven't we? And we've kept going. You've heard the expressions people trot out to minimize how tough it is to move on after a difficult event. I found some of these – strength grows in the moments when you think you can't go on but you keep going anyway – or how about this one – sometimes bad things happen to put us on the road for the good things to begin. Can you see where I'm going with this? I'm already tired of the motivational things folks are saying to try to 'encourage' each other through the terrible events of the pandemic we have been suffering in the world. I went to the dentist this week, and that very nice man, very gently said, I don't see any abscess, and the old filling is still intact. I've seen quite a few people in the last 7 months who are experiencing real pain in their mouths, from clenching or gritting their teeth through these difficult days. Really. Am I gritting my teeth? Trying to hang on – to figure out how to pray and minister to people whose hands I am not allowed to hold, to minister to people without being able to place the host in their hands at communion? Yes, I think I am. What are you doing with your worries, your concerns, your sense of loss? Because, friends, we just suffered a horrific wildfire event while 6 months into a global pandemic. If you're not stressed and concerned, you're not paying attention. So maybe we can connect a bit with the reading from Exodus this week chapter 33:12-23. Last week, (and in the previous chapter) the Hebrews mess up bigtime while Moses is communing with God on Mt. Sinai. They make a golden calf to worship because they feel left out of God's conversations with Moses. So dumb. But, predictable. They're not very used to this not being slaves thing. They are on the road to a whole new life, and they aren't prepared. Their mistake is huge. And God has a conversation with Moses, an angry one, but one that results in Moses stepping up. Defending the people based on God's great love for them. And today's reading is part two. In the aftermath of this awful thing that has happened, Moses is not sure about God's lasting care and support of the people. Poor Moses was in a place that many of us find ourselves: he was facing a future that looked incredibly difficult and he didn't feel like he had enough facts to face it with confidence. Moses was frightened for the future and he was asking God to fill in the gaps for him so he could face the future with less fear and more confidence. What am I saying? I think the reason many of us are so very stressed, so concerned and even gritting our teeth – is this – we're just not sure God is going with us as we move forward through the pandemic and out the other side. Moses pushes God, who appears still upset as God and Moses speak. God says, *'My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.'* ¹⁵And Moses said to him, *'If your presence will not go, do not carry us up from here. ¹⁶For how shall it be known that I have found favour in your sight, I and your people, unless you go with us?* If you're not going with us God what's the point? We're just going to struggle and fail and you know it. Your presence is what we need, it is what makes the difference in our lives. And so I ask you friends, do you believe God will go with you in each moment as you move through these covid days and the ones that will follow? Do you ever worry that maybe things are too bad, too dark, - maybe God's not going with us, with you as you move forward? Maybe its crossed your mind, or maybe just your emotions.

But, hear this one, will you – Moses loves being in God's presence – so much that he asks to see God's glory, right after this exchange where he's checked in to make sure Gods' still part of the team. And God, tenderhearted, loving, all powerful God says, sure. 'See, there is a place by me where you shall stand on the rock; ²²and while my glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by; ²³then I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back; but my face shall not be seen.' That's love my friends. That's how God feels about you. Think about that will you the next time you're clenching your teeth or worrying? Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee. Amen.

Pastor Patricia Hughes