

2020-05-10 Worship toolkit (Fifth Sunday of Easter)

Watchword for the Week:

Jesus says, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life.

No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6, NRSV)

(Moravian Daily Texts: https://www.moravian.org/daily_texts/)

(Poff, Stephen. Guarding Words and Actions, from **Art in the Christian Tradition**, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <http://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=55024> [retrieved May 7, 2020]. Original source: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/stephenpoff/3530640841/>.)

Bible reading: Acts 7:55-60 (The Stoning of Stephen)

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+7%3A55-60&version=GNT>

The Bible Gateway website includes further translations in English and many other languages.

(right mouse-click on the Bible Gateway link to 'open in a new tab' while listening to the audio file)

Hymn: We turn to God when we are sorely pressed (Church Hymnary, No. 393)
Sung to the tune EVENTIDE: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=doHcTPOjt2A>

- 1. We turn to God when we are sorely pressed;
we pray for help, and ask for peace and bread;
we seek release from illness, guilt, and death;
all people do, in faith or unbelief.*
- 2. We turn to God when he is sorely pressed,
and find him poor, scorned, without roof and bread,
bowed under weight of weakness, sin, and death;
faith stands by God in his dark hour of grief.*
- 3. God turns to us when we are sorely pressed,
and feeds our souls and bodies with his bread;
for one and all Christ gives himself in death:
through his forgiveness sin will find relief.*

Reflection: Sticks and Stones

<https://youtu.be/dVv7JdigGX0>

Hymn: I Sing a Song of the Saints of God (New Century Hymnal, No. 295):
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jWDPH_S9Vc0

Prayers (from Irene Bom's Prayer Matters blog for May 5, 2020)

We may not be able to confront queens,
or challenge presidents;
We may not have the capacity to divert resources,
or uplift communities;
We may not have the voice to silence the noise of war,
or the words to negotiate peace between armies;
But, as we follow you, O Christ, we are able to do something.

And so, we pray that you would inspire us
to commit to and act on
the small difference we can make:

May we bring peace
through small acts of gentleness
and reconciliation;

May we bring wealth
through small contributions
and collaborations;

May we bring safety
through small acts of consideration
and acceptance;

May we bring wholeness
through small acts of care
and service.

And in the small ways, O God,
may our small difference make a big contribution
to your saving work in our world.

Amen.

Blessing: A Clare Benediction (John Rutter)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pKChy-SRNSU&feature=youtu.be>

*May the Lord show his mercy upon you;
May the light of his presence be your guide:
May he guard you and uphold you;
May his spirit be ever by your side.*

*When you sleep may his angels watch over you;
When you wake may he fill you with his grace:
May you love him and serve him all your days
Then in heaven may you see his face.*

*May the Lord's loving kindness surround you;
Keep you safe as you journey on your way:
May he lead you and inspire you
As he grants you the gift of each new day.*

*May he bless all your loved ones and cherish them;
Ev'ry friend, ev'ry stranger at your door:
In the name of his Son our Saviour Christ
May God bless you now and evermore*

Postlude: Variations on the hymn "I Sing a Song of the Saints of God" (John Fahey):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZiV7icJ1Jz8>

Notices:

The **Pauluskirche** remains open, as it has done throughout the lockdown, on Tuesday to Friday from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. and on Sunday from 10 a.m. till noon for private prayer. If you do choose to visit the church, please observe the general restrictions (physical distancing, etc.) which still remain in place.

Revd Irene Bom, part-time minister based in Rotterdam, has a blog with the appropriate name **Prayer Matters**, where you can find inspiration in the form of photos, meditations, prayers, songs and more on a variety of themes and topics:

https://www.irenebom.com/prayer_matters/

In response to COVID-19, the global prayer project **Thy Kingdom Come** from 21-31 May 2020 has *prayer and care* as one of its key themes. More information on the project and on various resources connected with it at:

<https://www.thykingdomcome.global/>

Reacting to the digital revolution – and long before corona – the Church of Scotland began offering online ministry called **Sanctuary First** which includes daily worship as well as pastoral support for many life situations:

<https://www.sanctuaryfirst.org.uk/daily-worship>

Our **weekly offerings** during worship are our congregation's main source of income. The corona crisis has put a stop to this, so please consider making donations by bank transfer in order that the ECC may continue to cover ongoing costs. Bank account details are shown below. *Thank you.*