

July 14, 2020 Updates, and planning ahead

I am so glad to be your pastor. And, I have to admit, being able to preach in person to some of you this past Sunday was good for me. It is not easy preaching to a camera (ok, I know it's a little bit like whining to complain about this!). AND, I'm really proud of you all who are making good choices for YOUR Safety regarding whether you attend these Outdoor Parking Lot Courtyard worship services!!

We've worked hard (3 task forces worth – since the job is too big to plan worship in these new circumstances we have divided up the work into building, and building use, and worship service planning teams) to plan our worship events using the directives we have been given from the Oregon Health Authority, and the CDC, as well as the guidelines and suggestions from the Oregon Synod of the ELCA, and we have consulting info from other faith groups who have produced some good ideas/suggestions/guidelines.

You have a choice, always – 1)Stay Home, in order to be as safe as possible with your own health, 2)Attend worship in your car (we parked the cars right up against the fence of the garden in order for those folks to participate/hear the worship). 3)Attend worship in chairs you bring (if possible) while wearing your mask.

The worship Service planning team has followed the guidelines we have been given, and we offer *music from our singers (masked, and at a distance)*, and many opportunities *for hand motions as response* from the congregation, as well as encouragement to respond silently (in our hearts) to the familiar refrains. I heard from several of the folks who attended the worship how safe they felt, and how nice it was to be able to find a way to worship together.

Of course, the weather is lovely right now, in the main, so outside worship works quite well. *When the rains and colder weather of September or so force us inside we will be glad of these tools and adjustments we have made now to our worship routine.* These same people will again work hard to create worship under those new circumstances when we get there.

We are planning, at this point, to 'shoot for' every other week to worship outdoors, and offering our online worship experience the other week. We are trying not to duplicate labor too much. Of course, the printed worship bulletin will continue to come to you in the mail or on the website – www.holycrosslutheran-salem.org As people of God, our worship continues. And you have choices.

God bless you

Pastor Patricia Hughes +

July 14, 2020 - Opportunities at Holy Cross!!

Don't miss this opportunity at Holy Cross – from our Better together Collaboration with Christ the good Shepherd and St. Mark's Lutheran –

Racial Injustice discussion group will meet for the first time **Wednesday July 22nd at 6 pm** Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82788190930>
Meeting ID: 827 8819 0930

AND, don't forget the **“What is god Saying Today?” Group which currently meets on zoom at 5 pm Thursdays.** WE ARE GOING HYBRID THIS WEEK! If you have been wanting to participate but JUST CAN'T do zoom – show up in the library at 4:55 – we will have in person (up to 10 of us) as well as Zoom folks meeting together. *Remember – make your own best choice about staying safe, and wear a mask, no matter what!* That zoom link is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/78252959541?pwd=NVpsSjJhNG9GaldWditKbnlOeW1UQT09> and the meeting ID is: 782 5295 9541 Password: 9ZvcXn

This week we will study Jacob's Dream in Genesis 28:10-22 (we will look at some verses around it too!)

Sunday, July 19th – we will have all our usual worship opportunities on YouTube for you to worship our Lord.

Tuesday, July 21st, the FLY Steering Committee is meeting on Zoom. Contact Sarah Schultz if you are interested in working on that team.

Sunday, July 26th – we are planning to again celebrate worship in the Parking Lot/Courtyard at 10 am. Plans are developing now. As before, Masks will be required, and we will maintain social distancing, but the option of worshipping from you car without masks is also available.

Watch for this – **Kids are going to receive some special mailings the rest of summer about “The Lord's Prayer”.** If you know a kid who would like to receive this mailout/sticker set as a gift from Holy Cross – call Pastor Patricia right away – 503 510 9976. Our kids are our legacy. We need to nourish them.

Sermon for July 12, 2020 –

How are you? How are you doing? I really want to know – maybe you'll tell me later, in a text or a phone call, or even while standing 6 feet apart. I don't think we're doing so well – as Oregonians, or Americans or humans. We are all feeling worn down by the current disaster – Covid 19. And the accompanying lockdowns, shutdowns, and uncertainty. I think, besides all the isolation, and the ever increasing number of people who are ill, and people who have died, we have, many of us, lost our sense of purpose. And a sense of purpose is essential in humanity, and I venture to say, even more essential in people of faith. Purpose is what fills the empty spots in our heart, in our body, in our soul.

And both of our readings today speak to this for me.

But first, I want to quote a famous man who I heard give the 4th of July sermon from the National Cathedral, David Brooks. And David Brooks quoted his friend Catherine Bly Cox, who said, "When my daughter was born, I found I loved her more than evolution requires." Ah, so perfect. That love of a parent for a child turns out to be more than evolution requires. My husband's son sent him a postcard at fathers day this year, with a picture of his 6 month old daughter. "I never knew before how much love I was capable of until my daughter was born. Thank you Dad, for loving me."

What is my point? God loves us. Messy, annoying, conflicted piles of flesh that we are. And God's love demands paying forward. We simply must or it goes rancid within us. We honor God's love for us in this way, and have for generations. In Matthew 13, the good seed tries to come up among the thorns, but are choked out. But cursing the thorns doesn't help. Our faith endures through adversity, even when we are surprised to see that happen.

I see purpose also in the narrative of the Old Testament. You are acquainted with the background of Abraham and Isaac, and now we find ourselves on the verge of the next generation. Rebekah will carry two nations in her womb – Esau, the elder, and Jacob, the heel grabber, the pottage maker, who will take from the elder whenever he can find Esau being careless with his rights.

And the fighting began. How can God's promise endure through times of division, of petty name calling, and most of all – a lack of clarity about purpose. If God will make a great nation that will bless all nations, how is that possible when two brothers cannot get along? Who are we now that each news cycle brings more information about our divided nation? Who are we now that our personal outreach, as well as the outreach of the church, is limited and nearly frozen. Who are we if cannot serve as we have always served? How are we people of the promise when our actions seem so blunted, so spare?

Have you felt that way? During this Covid time? From both stories – wondering where all these weeds came from, and wondering what on earth our purpose is now? Holy Cross is a church that does service. Always has been. And now there is Covid. And we didn't have movie night this year for the kids, we weren't able to send something every Friday up to the school for the homeless kids (they weren't there, anyway), we aren't sharing our space with our friends from Manantial de Agua Vivas, reaching out to our neighbors, we aren't hosting the AA group that we have for at least 40 years. Who are we, if these things change? If serving is our purpose, what now?

Well, God loves us, and through us, my friends. That beating pulse of God's love will not be denied. I think it was the same for God as for Catherine Bly Cox. When humanity was born, God found God loved us more than evolution required. And gave that love into each of us. I do not know how God will use Holy Cross and use you to continue this life of service that God calls us to. But I know that God will. And I'm praying for God to show us very soon, very clearly, through each of us.

Amen. – Bless you, Pastor Patricia+

Praying together at Holy Cross – July 19, 2020

This summer, we are ‘searching for significance’ in this life of faith. When the world is full of change, we could choose to ‘lay low’ and wait for things to blow over. Or we could search for our own significance as the Body of Christ. We pray, Lord, for your help and guidance as we journey together toward that goal.



Lord, in your mercy Hear Our Prayer

We pray for those in leadership in our country, our state and our cities. May God sustain them and continue to point them to compassionate, quick and well-informed response.

Lord, in your mercy Hear Our Prayer

We pray for the uncertainty in our health. We pray for people concerned that their stuffy nose is something more. Be with us. (*specific people are mentioned here*)

Lord, in your mercy Hear Our Prayer

We pray for your awareness of your holy spaces. Help us to find a holy space in our own world, our home, our neighborhood. (*specific people are mentioned here*)

Lord, in your mercy Hear Our Prayer

We pray for the tension in decision making about worshipping together. Give us peace and grace. (*specific people are mentioned here*)

Lord, in your mercy Hear Our Prayer

We pray for those trying to calm the tensions in this new life. Help friends to reach out to help. (*specific people are mentioned here*)

Lord, in your mercy Hear Our Prayer

For this and all those matters, circumstances and individuals whose needs are brought to mind at this time. (*specific people are mentioned here*)

Lord, in your mercy Hear Our Prayer

We pray for Holy Cross leadership as we focus on our places of worship, and our means of serving. Thank you, Lord, for loving us. It is what makes all the difference. Amen.

WORSHIPPING AT HOME WITH HOLY CROSS
SUNDAY, JULY 19, 2020 – SEVENTH 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 – Listen, God is Calling ELW 513

Refrain:

(Listen,)

listen, God is calling, through the Word inviting,
offering forgiveness, comfort and joy.

(Listen,)

listen, God is calling, through the Word inviting,
offering forgiveness, comfort and joy.

- 1 (Jesus gave his mandate:)
share the good news
(that he came to save us)
and set us free. *Refrain*
- 2 (Let none be forgotten)
throughout the world.
(In the triune name of God)
go and baptize. *Refrain*
- 3 (Help us to be faithful,)
standing steadfast,
(walking in your precepts,)
led by your Word. *Refrain*

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Faithful God, most merciful judge, you care for your children with firmness and compassion. By your Spirit nurture us who live in your kingdom, that we may be rooted in the way of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

READINGS AND PSALM

Genesis 28:10-19a

Jacob's dream of the ladder to heaven

Psalms 139:1-12, 23-24

You have searched me out and known me. (*Ps. 139:1*)

Psalms 86:11-17

Romans 8:12-25

The revealing of the children of God

Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

The parable of the weeds

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**

HENRY - FREDERIC AMIEL

Jacob's dream – Genesis 28 – God is surely in this place! Where do you know for sure God is? Draw something on the back of this page of somewhere you KNOW God can be found!

