

Worshipping at Holy Cross – Summer 2020/Covid style – Also New opportunities at Holy Cross! June 30, 2020

First step – Know the limitations – from Pastor P+

I know you are all anxious to get back to worshipping with your friends and neighbors at Holy Cross. (I am anxious too – its no fun preaching to an empty room with a camera on you!)

We have a date for our next Worship on Site at Holy Cross! It's **Sunday, July 12 at 10 am!** Yep, a different time for different times! Lots of things will be different. This worship will be a **Parking Lot Worship!** That's different from the drive up communion we have been doing, but with some of the same ideas. We Will Worship **OUTSIDE** in the Parking Lot. LOTS more details will be coming to you, but I am introducing the idea this week. We'll ask you to bring some things – your own chairs if possible, so you don't have to worry about sanitizing (though we will have sanitized chairs available for you if you need them) The Elements – Your Own Bread and Wine or Juice (just like we've done in Drive Up Communion). You will need to **WEAR YOUR MASKS!** Period. (We will have masks available if you forget).

When we gather on Sunday, July 12th at 10 am, at our Parking Lot Worship, we will have music, and praying – the reading of lessons from the bible, and a sermon. There will be a spot for your to bring your offering (and your noisy offering), though no one will gather that from you. It's a time to learn new habits, as we worship together. Our service will be 45 minutes or less.

One of the most important new habits will be that the Congregation **WILL NOT SING.** Yes, that's an absolute.

Here's a quote from "Resuming Care filled Worship and Sacramental Life in a Pandemic" <https://liturgicalconference.org/resources/2020/6/8/resuming-care-filled-worship-and-sacramental-life-during-a-pandemic>

Music is a gift from God given to all creation. It is a means of connecting with God and with one another, and of unifying our thoughts and understanding, our heartbeats and breath. Praising the Lord is a scriptural mandate (see Psalm 150) and singing is a primary way most Christians have "praised the Lord" together. **However, we are now coming to grips with this disconcerting fact: The coronavirus is spread through moist breath. Several recent studies have found that forceful, sustained breathing, such as during singing and playing brass and wind instruments, appears to pose a greater danger of spreading the coronavirus than ordinary speaking at low volume.**

So, that's why we will have just a couple singers, who are appropriately distanced from the congregation, wearing masks, singing. By being OUTSIDE we diminish the possibility of passing the germ, but the possibility is still there.

SO – we will also learn **HAND MOTIONS** to certain parts of the worship, or **Listen** to a leader speak a part of the worship, while we use our **Internal Voice, to converse with God.**

There's no doubt these changes will be odd at first, but they are designed for healthy gathering, and I personally think that Learning New Habits is something Holy Cross already does very well.

Looking forward to this next adventure –

Pastor Patricia+

New Opportunities at Holy Cross!!

News from our Better Together Collaboration – With Christ the Good Shepherd and St. Mark's Lutheran Churches in Salem – formerly called Let's Talk

We meet on Zoom once a month to discuss things we're doing and what plans we need to make! Our next meeting is Tuesday, July 28th at 6 pm.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89700484912>

Two new groups have emerged from this collaboration – After the heartwarming Emanuel 9 worship, we now have a **Racial Injustice** discussion group which will meet for the first time on Wednesday July 22nd at 6 pm. Contact the office or Pastor P for that zoom link.

And our **FLY Youth Steering committee** will meet on **Tuesday 7/7 6:00-7:30pm** also on zoom. If you have been dreaming of helping our youth make an impact on the world around you this group is for you! Again, Contact the office or Pastor P for that zoom link.

Our Bible Study/Conversation on Thursdays at 5 pm "**What is God Saying Today?**" is planning to go hybrid – some folks meeting in person at the church, and some online via zoom. As we try to meet the needs of all in this changing environment, how can we be flexible? Show up this week and bring your thoughts, won't you? We will focus on Genesis 24 on July 2nd, and Genesis 25 on July 9th.

That Zoom link is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/78252959541?pwd=NVps>

WORSHIPPING AT HOME WITH HOLY CROSS
SUNDAY, July 5, 2020 – FIFTH 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 – I HEARD THE VOICE OF JESUS SAY- ELW 332

1 I heard the voice of Jesus say,
"Come unto me and rest;
lay down, O weary one, lay down
your head upon my breast."
I came to Jesus as I was,
so weary, worn, and sad;
I found in him a resting-place,

and he has made me glad.

2 I heard the voice of Jesus say,
"Behold, I freely give
the living water, thirsty one;
stoop down and drink and live."
I came to Jesus, and I drank
of that life-giving stream;
my thirst was quenched, my soul
revived,
and now I live in him.

3 I heard the voice of Jesus say,
"I am this dark world's light;
look unto me, your morn shall rise,
and all your day be bright."
I looked to Jesus, and I found
in him my star, my sun;
and in that light of life I'll walk
till trav'ling days are done.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

You are great, O God, and greatly to be praised. You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you. Grant that we may believe in you, call upon you, know you, and serve you, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

READINGS AND PSALM

Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67

The marriage of Isaac and Rebekah

Psalms 45:10-17

God has anointed you with the oil of gladness. (Ps. 45:7)

Romans 7:15-25a

The struggle within the self

Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

The yoke of discipleship

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

Sermon for June 28, 2020 Here I am. Christians and Jews throughout time are familiar with this phrase, Here I am – heinaini in Hebrew. Followers of God used the phrase when God called them to service – Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Samuel and Isaiah, all respond to the call of God with these words – Here I am. And that response is a complete sentence – a complete thought – it’s the response of a child to a parent. Back a million years ago when I would be playing outside for hours on end, my mother would call out my name, and I would tend to say, “what do you want?” because I didn’t want to be interrupted at my very important play unless I had to be. But Here I am is a different kind of response to the call of a beloved parent – it’s close to a ‘reporting for duty’ moment. An ‘at your service’ moment. But, this moment is not out of fear of reprisal if the child does not report, but rather, an open, trusting refocus on the expectation of benevolent love – from father to son, from God to beloved human.

This is a troubling event in biblical history – the binding of Isaac. Every time I read this passage I remember the gentleman in a bible study I attended in Flagstaff in 1998 who stated so clearly – “I resent a God who uses humans as object lessons”. And yes, that is one of the aspects of this narrative – After these things God tested Abraham. He said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." He said, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains that I shall show you. That’s a pretty clear narrative. God is testing him, and Abraham says Here I am. God gives him his marching orders, to take his beloved son and offer him as a burnt offering.

When we get to this moment, the thoughts that come to me are often, why would God do such a thing? How can a God of love expect murder – child murder? If God will do this, what else might God do? So, I don’t like the story much. I don’t like the precedent it sets.

But I really like the Here I am, the heinini part – and this is why. Because Abraham says Here I am again in this account. He has journeyed with his father, carrying the wood that will eventually make the pyre for his sacrifice, and he says to Abraham, Father? And Abraham responds “Here I am” and the story continues as the boy asks where is the animal that they will sacrifice, and Abraham answers, God will see to it- God himself will provide the lamb. It is Abraham’s Here I am that I notice here. The response of a child to a parent, open, loving, attentive. He is journeying to do God’s will, and his heart is heavy at the thought that God will require his son’s life – but he still responds with love to his son’s call – Father, with the complete availability in that phrase says - Here I am.

Relationships are tricky. We, as humanity, have been coming face to face with the way we have bent relationships in our world, to suppose one racial group inferior to another, people of gender orientations different from ours as less than. In these frightening time of Covid-19 pandemic we are coming face to face with inequality in access to health care. The vast numbers of infected people in the Navajo Nation reminds us of the centuries of neglect piled on that group of americans. So, as we search for significance together as Holy Cross Lutheran in Salem, Oregon, who are we now? The pandemic has affected our ability to offer care and resources to our neighbors. Many of our Holy Cross family are locked down – sheltering at home, still after 3 months, due to outbreaks and their own vulnerability. What can we glean from the story of Abraham and the binding of Isaac as we search for our own significance? For me, it is that availability, that willingness to serve, that Here I am, that I hear Abraham say both to his God, and to his family.

We know you can’t get a vision for what God has for you, until you make yourself available. Until you report for duty, with a heart full of willingness. Like Abraham did when he reported for duty to his God, and like Abraham did when he responded to the call of his son Isaac. Here I am. It is my prayer for you, and me and all of us, that we will search for significance together, first by making it clear that we will receive our marching orders from God as well as from our siblings in humanity – and that we are ready, open and willing to do the service that we are called to do. Amen. – Pastor Patricia Hughes+

Praying together at Holy Cross – July 5, 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 injured, and the ill. Give them your strength, your courage, to begin healing. *(specific people are mentioned here)*

Lord, in your mercy Hear Our Prayer

We pray for awareness of the opinions of others. Give us patience and wisdom to see the world how others see it. *(specific people are mentioned here)*

Lord, in your mercy Hear Our Prayer

We pray for young people, and their families in these days of summer memory making. *(specific people are mentioned here)*

Lord, in your mercy Hear Our Prayer

We pray for heart attitudes, and contentment in our lives. Give us vision to make the world a better place. *(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 plan the reopening of our place of worship. Thank you, Lord, for loving us. It is what makes all the difference. Amen.