

January 19, 2021 - This week's visuals – a few notes from Pastor Patricia's desk

Monday is a day off for many Americans, in order to focus on the life and legacy of **Martin Luther King, Jr.** He wasn't perfect, of course, but I appreciate the focus a day 'off' gives people. Martin Luther King Jr was a black man during the Jim Crow years in America, an educated man, a pastor, who followed his father's career into ministry. He was able to learn from the nonviolent movement and Mahatma Gandhi that there was another way to change the world.

I grew up with great movies about the Roman Empire and even World War 2 – where societies fought over what was important in their world. When I think of MLK jr, I picture a man in jail (Letters from a Birmingham Jail is worth your time to read) for no reason except trying to speak out for someone weaker, poorer, or more disadvantaged.

In these days when I find people aware of how much they have lost in the current pandemic (freedom to travel, jobs, and of course, family members and friends, lost to death), I think we need to imagine how much we can share. One of my favorite stories about pastors is the one about **Robert Sylvester Graetz Jr.. Pastor Graetz just happened to be pastor of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran, Montgomery, Alabama, during the bus boycott.** (You remember Rosa Parks). He opened supported the boycott, and drove people to work and back during that time. That was what he thought God had called him to do. Drive his car, and give people a ride to work and back. Sounds pretty simple doesn't it?

I have some concerns about focusing on the white pastor in this week of remembering one of the few black men who are honored by society at large. But, MLK jr is a bit bigger than life for me. Pastor Graetz, well, he just drove his car.

When we are confronted in these times with fear surrounding us, choices can be hard, they can be scary. But, couldn't we all, each of us choose to drive a few people to work and back? That job doesn't call for a giant of a man, like MLK, Jr. Maybe you and I can do those jobs? Today, in our neighborhood, and with our community?

We'll be talking about community a lot in the weeks ahead (it's our focus in Lent, too). Think about what you could do for your community, won't you? God bless you Pastor Patricia+

## **Events coming up for Holy Cross – in the next 30 days**

**What is God Saying Today? Bible Study** – Thursday, January 21<sup>st</sup>, noon in person (social distanced, and masked) and 5 pm zoom meeting on Zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84055018008?pwd=SlJHN0lkZWlUVF3aWE4MkEzV1BRdz09> – Meeting ID: 840 5501 8008 Passcode: 569519

We will study Mark 1:14-20

**Nominating Committee** - January 20, 2021 5:30 pm  
Time: Jan 20, 2021 05:30 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83439832293?pwd=QS9TMDhZSjg0TVJjTnNWblpXNDFZZz09>

Meeting ID: 834 3983 2293

Passcode: 002466

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**Annual meeting** – Sunday January 31, 10:15 am (following in person worship). This meeting will focus on passing the budget, and opening conversation

**Racial Justice** - Our Three ELCA churches in Salem (we call ourselves the Better Together churches) are restarting our Racial Justice group next month for 2021.

Learning about Racism is so important and yet can be difficult. When we do it together (like on this zoom call) we are able to support each other's path!

The Better Together - Racial Justice Committee kicks off 2021 with the viewing of "The Uncomfortable Truth" The history of institutional racism in America through the lives of two people in this 46 minute Emmy winning documentary.

Join us Wednesday February 10, 2021 at 6 pm. Topic: The Uncomfortable Truth Video

Time: Feb 10, 2021 06:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86532600817?pwd=VVkxY2VUaE9uYlZuQ3lZRM8vY0FQdz09>

Meeting ID: 865 3260 0817 Passcode: 607605

**Call.** It was a Tuesday morning, so holy cross was a busy place, even in COVID-19 times. There were 4 or 5 folks around the bulding, watering plants, and getting the weekly mailout prepared. It was raining, so nothing much was happening outside but Loran stopped by the office to ask if I would talk to a man who he had run into outside the church. I almost asked a few questions, but then decided not to. I asked the gentleman into my office, he was wearing a mask, and so was I, and we didn't shake hands or anything. My dog Sassy barked at him twice, and then curled up at his feet as I asked him to sit in one of my chairs. I asked his name, Sam, and told him mine. He was hesitant, and talked just a bit about 'seeing so much that is bad'. I listened. Sam talked a few minutes about "all that he has seen". He paused a lot. Finally, I said, "Sam, are you alright?" He looked up at me then, in the eyes. "Yes, I, well I think I'm a babysitter. For God." I remember smiling at that, and I said something like, well I gotta hear more about that. As his story unfolded, he talked about walking the streets in our area of town nearly every night, beginning around 10. Sam said he just walked. And when he met people out on the streets he'd look them in the eye, and ask them, "Are you alright? Do you need anything?" Some people would try to get him to help them get drugs or liquor, he said, but he'd just shake his head at that. But if someone was hungry, he'd take them to get food. Sam said one man runs a store, and so he bought a few things to help him out. I asked a bit more about the bad things Sam said he saw. "People are so afraid. There's a lot of bad things happening.' And I realized I didn't need to know more. There are a lot of bad things happening. I asked Sam if he needed a bible, and he said a lady he met gave him one the other night. I told Sam I thought he was doing God's work, and I thanked him. And I asked if he would come see me again in a week or so. We prayed and he moved on. I thought about Samuel in the bible. Called over and over by a loving God, who finally learns to say, Speak, lord, for your servant is listening.

I thought about Philip in the gospel <sup>5</sup>Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth." The bible has no shortage of stories of Call. God has always called who he needs to be God's hands and feet on the planet, caring for people, offering kindness.

Until I sat with Sam that day this week, and heard him talk about what he sees, I wasn't really in touch with how the events of the world have touched me, and I think have touched you. We've seen bad things. When I close my eyes, sometimes I see that scaffolding that the mob erected outside the capitol – a noose, ready for a lynching. A visual meant to send terror into the hearts of our governing officials, just as it was used to terrorize our black brothers and sisters since shameful slavery days. Like Sam, you and I have seen things. Things are bad. I think we must admit to ourselves that we have all been terrorized in these past days. I should not be surprised that it seems God has called a man like Sam, to be a babysitter of the people out at night. To ask, are you all right? Do you need anything? And then to minister where he can. It's not so unusual to be called by God, after all. I have no doubt you are called, just as Sam is, and I am. We are called to be a witness in these times. And I'm thinking of a quote by another Sam I know, "It's like the great stories, the ones that really mattered. Full of darkness and danger they were, and sometimes you didn't want to know the end because how could the end be happy? How could the world go back to the way it was when so much bad has happened? But in the end, it's only a passing thing this shadow, even darkness must pass. A new day will come, and when the sun shines, it'll shine out the clearer. I know now folks in those stories had lots of chances of turning back, only they didn't. They kept going because they were holding on to something. That there's some good in this world, Mr. Frodo, and it's worth fighting for." Thank you friends, for living out your calling from God. Amen.-  
Pastor Patricia Hughes

## WORSHIPPING AT HOME WITH HOLY CROSS

Third Sunday of Epiphany

January 24, 2021

### CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,  
whose voice is upon the waters,  
whose mercy is poured out upon all people,  
whose goodness cascades over all creation.

**Amen.**

Let us confess our sin, trusting in the abundant grace of God.

Holy God,

**you search us and know us.**

**You are acquainted with all our ways.**

**We confess that our hearts are burdened by sin—  
our own sins and the broken systems that bind us.**

**We turn inward, failing to follow  
your outward way of love.**

**We distrust those who are not like us.**

**We exploit the earth and its resources  
and fail to consider generations to come.**

**Forgive us, gracious God,**

**for all we have done and left undone.**

**Even before the words are on our tongues,  
you know them;**

**receive them in your divine mercy.**

**Amen.**

How vast is God's grace!

Through the power and promise of † Christ Jesus,  
our sins are washed away

and we are claimed as God's own beloved.

Indeed, we are forgiven.

In the wake of God's forgiveness,

we are called to be the beloved community

living out Christ's justice

and the Spirit's reconciling peace.

**Amen.**

## GATHERING HYMN – ELW 798 “Will You Come and Follow Me”

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|---|---|---|
| 1 "Will you come and follow me<br>If I but call your name?<br>Will you go where you don't know<br>And never be the same?<br>Will you let my love be shown,<br>Will you let my love be known,<br>Will you let my life be grown<br>In you and in me?              | 5 | Lord, your summons echoes true<br>when you but call my name.<br>Let me turn and follow you<br>and never be the same.<br>In your company I'll go<br>where your love and footsteps show.<br>Thus I'll move and live and grow<br>in you and you in me. |
| 2 "Will you leave yourself behind<br>if I but call your name?<br>Will you care for cruel and kind<br>and never be the same?<br>Will you risk the hostile stare,<br>should your life attract or scare?<br>Will you let me answer pray'r<br>in you and you in me? |   |   |

### **PRAYER OF THE DAY:**

Almighty God, by grace alone you call us and accept us in your service. Strengthen us by your Spirit, and make us worthy of your call, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

### **READINGS AND PSALM**

#### **Jonah 3:1-5, 10**

*Repentance at Nineveh*

#### **Psalms 62:5-12**

God alone is my rock and my salvation. (Ps. 62:6)

#### **1 Corinthians 7:29-31**

*Living in the end times*

#### **Mark 1:14-20**

*The calling of the disciples at the sea*

### **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 power of 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**

**THE PRAYERS** of Intercession (see attached prayers)

### **OFFERING PRAYER**

O God,  
receive these gifts as you receive us:  
like a mother receives her child, with arms open wide.  
Nourish us anew in your tender care,  
and empower us in faithful service  
to tend to others with this same love,  
through Jesus Christ, our saving grace. **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. Now we bring to you this same bread of life and this same cup of blessing, that you may be strengthened through your participation in the body

of Christ.

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.***

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

### **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Christ Jesus,  
at this table we have feasted on your very life  
and are strengthened for our journey.  
Send us forth from this banquet  
nourished in body and in spirit  
to proclaim your good news  
and serve others in your name.  
**Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

*Lord remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.*

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,  
your will be done, on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,  
now and forever. Amen.**

### **BLESSING**

God the creator strengthen you;  
Jesus the beloved fill you;  
and the Holy Spirit the comforter † keep you in peace.  
**Amen.**

### **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Be the light of Christ.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**Praying together at Holy Cross –**

**January 24, 2021- 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Epiphany**

Guided by Christ made known to the nations, let us offer our prayers for all. For the faithful throughout the world, for pastors and teachers, for deacons, for musicians and servers, that all proclaim the good news of God's reconciling love,

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

For skies and seas, for birds and fish, for favorable weather and clean water, and for the well-being of creation, that God raise up advocates and scientists to guide our care for all the earth,

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

For those who provide leadership in our cities and around the world, for nonprofit and nongovernmental organizations, for planning commissions and homeless advocates, that God inspire all people in the just use of wealth,

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

For those who are sick, distressed, or grieving; for the outcast and all who await relief from this pandemic, and from the economic and political tumult of our time. In the midst of suffering, God's peace and mercy surround us all,

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

For our congregation and community, for families big and small, and for the organizations that meet here during the week, that God's steadfast love serve as a model for all relationships,

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

In thanksgiving for our ancestors in the faith whose lives serve as an example of gospel living, that they point us to salvation through Christ,

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Merciful God, hear the prayers of your people, spoken or silent, for the sake of the one who dwells among us, your Son, Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

