

## Devotional for May 20, 2020

### Announcements

1. Thank you to everyone who continue to send in their tithes and offerings. Every little bit helps us to continue functioning while we remain closed. Please continue to send the tithes and offerings to Mickie Ulm at 516 Idlewhile Ct. Farmington, IL 61531.
2. We are going to continue with having music each week. Thank you to Diana Rolando and Beth Martin for all you do to bring us music during worship. If you are interested in sharing your vocal or musical talents, please comment below and I'll get in touch with you.
3. I have compiled a list of high school graduates from our congregation. I think it would be great for us to send them a card shower. This is a particularly difficult year for our graduates. Know that we recognize and want to celebrate your hard work! So far, for our list, I have Gabe Benson, grandson of Glenene and Dale Bensen; Jaden Rutledge, grandson of Jane and Sam Rutledge; and Rachel Elliott, granddaughter of Jean Peterson. If you know of anyone else who could use a card shower, please let me know and I'll make sure to add them to the list. If you would like a copy of their addresses, please don't hesitate to call me and I can make sure you get their addresses.
4. Don't forget that each Friday, weather permitting, I will set out the church's grocery cart on the East side of the church building, near the intersection of Gold and Fulton. It will be out from 10-5. If you need to make arrangements for a different drop off time, once again, comment below or email me.
5. I'm looking for people to help ring the church bell every night at 7pm, for 1 minute. We ring the bell every night to say thank you to those who are serving as essential workers during this time. If you would like to help ring the bell, please let Pastor Andy know and we will set up a schedule.

### Psalm 47 (CEB)

**47** Clap your hands, all you people! Shout joyfully to God with a joyous shout! <sup>2</sup> Because the LORD Most High is awesome, he is the great king of the whole world. <sup>3</sup> He subdues the nations under us, subdues all people beneath our feet.<sup>4</sup> He chooses our inheritance for us: the heights of Jacob, which he loves.<sup>5</sup> God has gone up with a joyous shout—the LORD with the blast of the ram's horn.<sup>6</sup> Sing praises to God! Sing praises! Sing praises to our king! Sing praises<sup>7</sup> because God is king of the whole world! Sing praises with a song of instruction! <sup>8</sup> God is king over the nations. God sits on his holy throne.<sup>9</sup> The leaders of all people are gathered with the people of Abraham's God because the earth's guardians belong to God; God is exalted beyond all.

### Meditation

So many of the Psalms that I have been using and preaching on over the past two months have been, well, kinda downers. This week, I wanted to take a moment to lift up a positive Psalm to preach on. Psalm 47 reminds us that we are called to shout joyfully

to God because God is awesome. God is the one who cares for us and provides for us. I love verse 9 of Psalm 47: “The leaders of all people are gathered with the people of Abraham’s God because the earth’s guardians belong to God; God is exalted beyond all.” We all belong to God, who is above all others.

I believe that we are called to take time to praise God in our daily lives. And I believe it is especially important for us to take time during this pandemic to remember all the ways that God has provided for us during this time. When we were sick, God sent us doctors and nurses and hospital staff to care for us. When we were lonely and worried, God sent the Holy Spirit to sit beside us. We are not alone during this time, and that should be cause enough for us to praise God.

I don’t know how long this pandemic is going to continue. All I do know is that I am tired and exhausted and ready for things to return to normal. I miss my family and friends. I know that this time is difficult for all of us. I have to intentionally remind myself that, in the midst of all the negative, stressful stuff going on in my life, that I can still praise God for the good things in my life. During this time, I think it would be important to keep a joy journal or a list of those things that you are grateful for. Each day, when you wake up and when you go to bed, write down the things that you are most grateful for and give thanks to God. I am thankful that I have a house to live in and a job and food to eat and the ability to be in contact with loved ones over long distances. And I know that, even though the pandemic seems all encompassing, the God that we worship is even greater than Covid 19. So, I am grateful that I am not alone in this time. And neither are you. So, let us praise the Lord in all that we do. Amen.

### **Prayer**

We’ve now come to a time of prayer. Let us pray, “Good and gracious God, we come to you today knowing that there is still so much turmoil and anxiety in our lives. We are worried and stressed about our jobs, our finances, our living arrangements, and so much more. We know that there are so many people out there who are hurting, maybe we are hurting as well. And so, God of healing, I pray that you would send your Holy Spirit to be with us and guide us. Help us to stay firm and resolute in Your presence. May our whole lives and hearts and actions bless Your holy name. Please be with those who are on the front lines of this health crisis today. May they be protected and cared for in this time. Be with those who are keeping us safe during this time. May they be protected and cared for in this time as well. And Lord, embolden us to be your Holy Church wherever we are. Help us to proclaim Your praises in our words and in our actions. Help us to be your people and Your Church. In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, we pray. Hear us now as we pray the prayer Jesus taught us to pray together, saying:

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation, but delivers us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

### **Benediction**

Depart from this place trusting in the gracious mercy of God. And as you depart, go with the love of God, the peace of Jesus Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, this day to do God's work. Amen.