

Good morning everybody! I hope all of you are doing well today. Weather is getting nice outside. I am excited that Spring has sprung. It is a beautiful day out there today. I hope you can get out and go for a walk, while maintaining social distancing.

Announcements

I have a few announcements for you this morning.

1. Session has extended closing our congregation through April 30. This follows the recommendation of the CDC and order from the Governor of Illinois. This includes all committees, fellowship, and groups meeting at the church.
2. During Holy Week, Pastor Andy will host a worship service for Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter on Facebook live. Worship will begin at 6:30PM on Thursday, April 9 and Friday April 10. Easter Sunday worship will be at 10:30AM on Sunday.
3. On Palm Sunday, April 5, we will have a fellowship time at 11:15AM. It will be on Zoom. I have sent out a link on email and it is on the church's Facebook page. Please forward the link to anyone who might want it.
4. Once again, if you need to get ahold of me, you can call me at 217-994-8588. That's 217-994-8588. You can also email me at revandysonneborn@gmail.com.

Scripture

Let us now turn our attention to Holy Scripture. Today's lesson comes to us from Psalm 130. This is from the Common English Bible version of the Bible. Listen for the Word of God.

"I cry out to you from the depths, LORD—my Lord, listen to my voice! Let your ears pay close attention to my request for mercy! If you kept track of sins, LORD—my Lord, who would stand a chance? But forgiveness is with you—that's why you are honored.

I hope, LORD. My whole being hopes, and I wait for God's promise. My whole being waits for my Lord—more than the night watch waits for morning; yes, more than the night watch waits for morning! Israel, wait for the LORD! Because faithful love is with the LORD; because great redemption is with our God! He is the one who will redeem Israel from all its sin.”

This is the Word of our Lord, thanks be to God.

Meditation

Let us pray, “May the words of my mouth and the meditations of our hearts, be acceptable in your sight, Lord our rock and redeemer. Amen.”

Psalm 30 is jam packed with wonderful passages. “I cry out to you from the depths, LORD—my Lord, listen to my voice!” “My whole being waits for my Lord!” “God is the one who will redeem Israel from all its sin.” I love this imagery this passage invokes. It is so passionate. It is clearly written, in my humble opinion, by someone who is struggling with life and praying to God for help. I hope in the Lord. I wait for the Lord. Great is God's redemption. Faithful is God's love. God will redeem Israel. I don't know what was going on when this Psalm was written. I don't know what the psalmist was going through when they wrote this passage. But it is clear that the Psalmist is struggling to stay connected with God in the midst of a great trial.

I wonder if anyone listening to this devotional this morning knows what it's like to be going through a trial right now? I say that tongue-in-cheek. We are all going through a tough time right now and I imagine a great deal of people are crying out to the Lord from the depths, much like the Psalmist is doing in Psalm 130.

A lot of people are struggling just to make it through the day. All of our routines have been disrupted. And I'm afraid that things aren't going to be going back to “normal” for some time, if at all. For those of you who are old enough to remember 9/11, things changed forever. While the Corona Virus pandemic is not the

same kind of tragedy as 9/11, like 9/11 life is going to have a new normal after this is over. We are going to have to struggle with this new normal for quite some time.

But, lest we forget, the Psalmist reminds us that we are not alone in this crisis. God is present with us and great is God's redemptive love for us. We are not alone in this time. Have hope in the Lord. Trust that God will get us through this. And to those who get sick and those who die, trust that they are not alone. God's redemptive love is with them as well. I give thanks to God, even as I worry about and stress over and mourn for all that is going. To God be the glory. Amen.

Prayer

Now is a time of prayer. Let us pray, "God of all creation, we come to you, knowing that things are really scary right now. We admit that we are anxious and worried and stressed. We don't know what the future holds. Remind us that you hold the future. Remind us that you are the God of the past, God of the present, and God of the future. There is nowhere we can go to flee from your presence. We put our hope in you in this time. Help us to remember and trust in your redemptive love this day and every day. And hear us as we pray the prayer your son, Jesus Christ, 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. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and glory forever. Amen."

Benediction

Go in peace to serve the Lord this day and every day. And as you go, go with the love of God, and the peace of Jesus Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit this day and every day. Go and serve the Lord. Amen.