

Dear Trinity,

How are you holding up? Seriously, I want to know.

Maybe you're like me where some days feel good but other days you're on the very edge of losing your temper. Maybe your kids are like mine as they swing from being self contained to in need of constant supervision. Maybe you slept well last night or maybe it was one of the nights where you were awake from 3-4:30 for no apparent reason. Yes, I've done that too.

Maybe today you're doing okay, but tomorrow? Who knows.

Friends, it's okay not to be okay. It's not uncommon to feel like you've successfully established a new order only to be surprised just a moment later to realize you can't concentrate. You're in good company when you've lost track of the day or when you feel a surge of impatience. It's okay to worry about your grandparents or grandchildren and about the economy too.

Your mixed up emotions and needs and fears? They're normal. In fact, I don't think what we're feeling right now is that far removed from our everyday experience. The difference is that our pace of life has slowed and we're left with less distractions. We are, now, alone with our thoughts (and possibly with the thoughts of teenage boys depending on your household). The shadows of old grief mixed with new worry sometimes overtake us. And, that is normal.

Don't get me wrong, I'm not saying that I like it or that it's easy.

But the pinging between emotions, the examination of old wounds, the questions echoing in our minds - it's normal. I mean, look to the Bible if you don't believe me.

Take Moses! He goes from prince to fugitive in short order and when God calls him to free the people from slavery in Egypt, well, Moses has second thoughts to say the least! He argues with God (good luck with that). He worries about his qualifications and tries to get out of doing what God tells him. But God is there with presence and purpose.

Or, Queen Esther. She was a common woman with uncommon beauty who ended up marrying the King. She was hesitant to sound the alarm against an unjust leader. She tried convincing herself that if she personally was okay then everyone would be okay. But she couldn't shake the call to act, to speak out for God's people.

You can even look at Jesus who, in the Garden of Gethsemane, prays that this "cup," the suffering and death at hand, will pass. Seriously, even Jesus bounces from commitment to questioning!

But it's in these scenes of Jesus at the end of his life where I, for one, find comfort. I look to the cross and see it empty - not because Jesus found a loophole in this life to avoid pain. No, the cross is empty because Jesus died there. He died and was buried and rose again. Jesus, who is God with us, Jesus does not give up on us, on our experience. Jesus doesn't save himself from our sin. Jesus doesn't hide himself from our suffering. Jesus stays.

And Jesus stays with us now, too. Because that's who God is: present and abiding, loving and working for our good. Too often, we mistake God for a genie holding back on wishes we're entitled to and getting angry with God because life is hard. But the cross of Jesus isn't a good

luck charm, as some would have it. It's a compass guiding us into a relationship with the one who creates and loves us.

Jesus loves you, dear ones. Jesus loves you in all your worry and your wonder. Jesus loves you when you can't sleep and on the days you can't stay awake. Jesus loves you and as we live in this strange time, rest assured, Jesus is with us because that is who Jesus is. Simple. Profound.

Jesus loves you. And I do too.

Pastor Amy

Good Samaritan Fund

As these days of quarantine and not working continue, please keep in mind that Trinity has a Good Samaritan Fund to help people - you! - with bills. Please know if you need any help, you can contact Pastor Amy who keeps all names confidential. We're able to make a one time payment \$250 toward a bill you may have. Please, don't hesitate to contact Pastor Amy. We want to help our Trinity family too.

Thanks to all who have recently donated to the Good Samaritan Fund.

Property Ministry Team

There are some things around Church property that the Property Ministry Team could use some help with. Sue Bradley and Scott have cleaned up a few things, but here are some other things that would help:

The Adams street house yard has become a bit overgrown. There are bushes that need to be cut back and thinned.

There is an abandoned pond on the property and should probably be removed.

There are some tools under the church inside the little doorway across from the back parking lot.

Someone may be spreading weed/feed soon.

If you have any questions, and can help, please contact Sue Bradley (bradleysusank@gmail.com) and Alan Cook.

PRAYERS REQUESTED FOR.....Judy Almquist, Marsha Anderson, Sandy Anderson, Nick Bee, Doris Carmichael, Linda Doerr, Kim Hannan, Renee Jensen, Ben Jung, Ron Kemmerling, Bob Kyle, Phyllis Lang, Dan Morrow, Pam Nicholas, Debbie Pierce, Tom Pomraning, Tim Sawyer, Denny Stark, Shelley Scheurm, Ruth Smithback, Karen Weber, Donna Weeks, Donald Zuehlke and those we name silently in our hearts.



Daily Faith Practices

The Fifth Sunday of Easter (A) – 1 Peter 2:2-10

Focus: *Priesthood of All Believers*

word of life

“But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.” (1 Peter 2:9-10 NRSV)

Read 1 Peter 2:2-10

This passage is an eloquent conclusion to the initial section of the First Letter to Peter, providing a vibrant description contrasting the old and new life in Christ Jesus. Life after the resurrection of Jesus is not the same; there is the possibility of a new birth in Christ Jesus.

This rebirth is emphasized as the writer compares his audience to newborn infants. These words are not intended to be insulting, but rather to underscore the radical new life provided by the mighty act of God shown in the risen Christ. “Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation—if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.” (1 Peter 2:2 NRSV) Milk satisfies the basic need of an infant for life itself. There is nothing quite like the cry of an infant who is hungry and needing to be fed.

1. *Describe the sound when a newborn infant is ready to be fed milk.*
2. *How are believers in Christ like newborn infants?*
3. *What does it mean to taste that the Lord is good?*

The writer of First Peter extends an invitation to draw near Christ, but the image shifts to architecture as Christ is described as a living stone. Take a moment to reflect on this phrase *living stone*. Think of the variety of stones found on this earth—beautiful gems for jewelry and practical rocks used for buildings.

4. *When you think of Jesus as a living stone, what image comes to mind?*
5. *How can a stone be living?*

Jesus is not the only living stone, but for those who follow him are invited to be used as living stones as well. God intends to build something—a spiritual house. It is the Holy Spirit who calls, gathers, and uses followers of Christ to create an architectural masterpiece built upon Jesus Christ as the cornerstone.

God knows some will reject the cornerstone of Jesus Christ and not accept him as a living stone. They will stumble over him and his message of life. They will not be able to grasp the precious gift given to the world through Christ. “The stone that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner.” (1 Peter 2:7 NRSV)

6. *What does it mean to stumble over Jesus?*
7. *What makes the cornerstone an important feature in a building?*

These images help to underscore the divine calling from God to be part of a holy priesthood—people set apart by God for God’s own purpose. The wall between humanity and God has been torn down. The world has been turned upside down. All people will have access to God through Christ. All people! This calling to be a spiritual house, a chosen people, royal priesthood, a holy nation, and God’s own people has laid the theological foundation for the priesthood of all believers.

Word among us

The congregation gathered for a strategic planning session. They broke into small groups with two assignments. First, they were to define *church*. This assignment created some lively discussions. As much as they had experienced being part of a church, it was a challenging task to agree on one main definition.

The second assignment was to read 1 Peter 2:2-10, a passage rich with vivid images to describe the community of faithful.

1. *List the images of church found in this passage.*
2. *If someone is struggling in life, which image might be meaningful to hear?*

Each image of the church in 1 Peter 2:2-10 is helpful in grasping the implications of being part of the body of Christ. Take some time to discuss the implications of each of the following phrases found in this passage.

3. *A chosen race: What is the church chosen to do?*
4. *A royal priesthood: How are people in your church trained to be priestly?*
5. *A holy nation: What does it mean to be connected to those throughout the globe into a Christian nation?*
6. *God's own people: What might be the danger of believing we are God's own people?*

No matter our preference of image, it is God who calls us to *do* something—to proclaim the mighty acts of God. We are not left to pat ourselves on the back because we are living stones, a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and God's own people. There is work to be done. We proclaim the mighty acts of God through both our words and our actions.

7. *Which is your favorite image in 1 Peter 2 for the church?*

faith practice in daily life

Proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed

1 Peter 2:2-10 was a key passage in the Reformation as Christian leaders in the early 1500s struggled with the role of the pope, priests, and laity. The reformers seriously reviewed the implications of a priesthood of all believers. Their questions were basic: Have not all baptized believers received God's grace in Jesus Christ? Are not all believers called out of darkness into the light of Christ?

One of the critical changes during the Reformation was a re-claiming of this core principle of the priesthood of all believers. Priests and pastors are not the only ones who have access to God, but rather all believers can go directly to God. In the same way, all believers—young and old—have opportunities to proclaim the mighty acts of God.

8. *What is the role of clergy within the priesthood of all believers?*
9. *What does it mean for you to be part of priesthood of all believers?*

Prayer

Mighty God, open us to the opportunities to proclaim your mighty acts. Amen

last word

Pray each day this week on behalf of those in need.