

COVID-19 Memorial Service

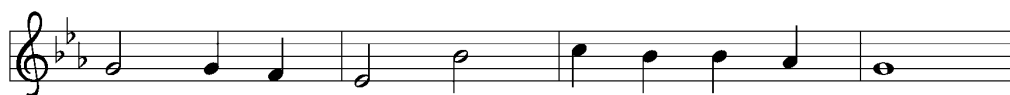


A Service of
Remembrance, Reflection,
and Prayer
in the Midst of a Pandemic

We welcome you to Zion this afternoon for a service of remembrance, prayer and reflection. We ask that everyone in attendance wear their mask the entire time you are in the building. Restrooms can be found at the entrance of the building. At the end of the service, you are welcome to take your candle home with you. As you leave, feel free to light a votive candle in memory of someone who has died or in hope for the days ahead. You are welcome to stay after and pray for as long as you might need. Be sure to check out the resource tables in the chapel for helpful ways to process grief. And again, welcome!

WELCOME

HYMN – Abide with Me



1 A - bide with me, fast falls the e - ven - tide.
 2 Swift to its close ebbs out life's lit - tle day;
 3 I need thy pres - ence ev - 'ry pass - ing hour;
 4 I fear no foe, with thee at hand to bless;
 5 Hold thou thy cross be - fore my clos - ing eyes,



The dark - ness deep - ens; Lord, with me a - bide.
 earth's joys grow dim, its glo - ries pass a - way;
 what but thy grace can foil the tempt - er's pow'r?
 ills have no weight, and tears no bit - ter - ness.
 shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies;



When oth - er help - ers fail and com - forts flee,
 change and de - cay in all a - round I see;
 Who like thy - self my guide and stay can be?
 Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy vic - to - ry?
 heav'n's morn - ing breaks, and earth's vain shad - ows flee;



help of the help - less, oh, a - bide with me.
 O thou who chang - est not, a - bide with me.
 Through cloud and sun - shine, oh, a - bide with me.
 I tri - umph still, if thou a - bide with me!
 in life, in death, O Lord, a - bide with me.

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 2a5:6-10

On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples
a feast of rich food, a feast of well-matured wines,
of rich food filled with marrow, of well-matured wines strained clear.
And he will destroy on this mountain
the shroud that is cast over all peoples,
the sheet that is spread over all nations;
he will swallow up death for ever.
Then the Lord GOD will wipe away the tears from all faces,
and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth,
for the LORD has spoken.
It will be said on that day,
Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, so that he might save us.
This is the LORD for whom we have waited;
let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.
For the hand of the LORD will rest on this mountain.

Psalm 121

I lift up my eyes to the hills;
from where is my help to come?
**My help comes from the Lord,
the maker of heaven and earth.**
The Lord will not let your foot be moved
nor will the one who watches over you fall asleep.
**Behold, the keeper of Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep;**
the Lord watches over you;
the Lord is your shade at your right hand;
**the sun will not strike you by day,
nor the moon by night.**
The Lord will preserve you from all evil
and will keep your life.
**The Lord will watch over your going out and your coming in,
from this time forth forevermore.**

Romans 8: 31-39

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us

everything else? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written,

'For your sake we are being killed all day long;
we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.'

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Matthew 5:1-12

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

'Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

'Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

'Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

'Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

'Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Reflection

Special Music Selection

Prayers

Let us pray. Almighty God, in holy baptism you have knit your chosen people together into one communion of saints in the body of Christ. Give to your whole church in heaven and on earth your light and your peace.

God of mercy,

hear our prayer.

Grant that all who have been baptized into Christ's death and resurrection may die to sin and rise to share the new life in Christ.

God of mercy,
hear our prayer.

Give courage and faith to all who mourn,
and a sure and certain hope in your loving care,
that, casting all their sorrow on you,
they may have strength for the days ahead.

God of mercy,
hear our prayer.

Grant to us who are still in our pilgrimage, and who walk as yet by faith,
that, where this world groans in grief and pain,
your Holy Spirit may lead us to bear witness to your light and life.

God of mercy,
hear our prayer.

Help us, in the midst of things we cannot understand,
to believe and trust in the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins, and the resurrection to life everlasting.

God of mercy,
hear our prayer.

The presiding minister concludes the prayers.

God of all grace, we give you thanks because by his death our Savior Jesus Christ destroyed the power of death and by his resurrection he opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. Make us certain that because he lives we shall live also, and that neither death nor life, nor things present nor things to come, will be able to separate us from your love in Christ Jesus our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Passing of Light

The congregation will light candles to represent not only our faith as a light in dark times but also the presence of those who are struggling with so many different losses.

Candle Lighting: Litany of Remembrance

ONE: We light this candle to remember those persons who have been loved and lost. We pause to remember their names, their faces, their voices. We give thanks for the memory that binds them to us this season which anticipates the Lord's coming

May God's eternal love surround them.

(Time for silent reflection)

TWO: We light this second candle to redeem the pain and loss: the loss of relationships, the loss of jobs, and the loss of health, the loss of opportunities to create memories. As we gather up the pain of the past, we offer it to You, O God. Asking that into our broken hearts and open hands, you place the gift of peace.

Refresh, restore, renew us, Oh God, and lead us into your future.

(Time for silent reflection)

THREE: We light this third candle to be reminded of your call to love one another and show kindness. As we continue to deal with the trauma of Covid19, help to show love when hatred is present. Because in showing love, we know you are with us.

Let us remember that God's light shines in the darkness and the darkness cannot overcome it.

(Time for silent reflection)

FOUR: This fourth candle is lit to remember our trust in God and the gift of hope which comes from God. We remember that God, who shares our life, promises us a place and time of no more pain and suffering. May the glow of the flame be our source of hopefulness now and forever.

Let us remember the one who shows the way and who goes with us into our tomorrows.

(Time for silent reflection)

Closing Prayer

Brothers and sisters,
we are lost in the night no more,
but live in the promise of Christ.
Though we still live in a season of life where the pandemic still rages,
We know you are with us and your light will guide us
Through all fear, danger, and need.
God, who sends light to overcome all darkness,
grant you grace, mercy, and peace.

Amen

Closing Hymn – Thy Holy Wings



1 Thy ho - ly wings, O Sav - ior, spread gent-ly o - ver me,
2 Oh, let me nes - tle near thee, with - in thy down-y breast
3 Oh, wash me in the wa - ters of No-ah's cleans-ing flood.



and let me rest se - cure - ly through good and ill in thee.
where I will find sweet com-fort and peace with - in thy nest.
Give me a will - ing spir - it, a heart both clean and good.



Oh, be my strength and por - tion, my rock and hid - ing place,
Oh, close thy wings a - round me and keep me safe - ly there,
Oh, take in - to thy keep - ing thy chil - dren great and small,



and let my ev - 'ry mo - ment be lived with-in thy grace.
for I am but a new - born and need thy ten - der care.
and while we sweet-ly slum - ber, en - fold us one and all.

Text: Carolina Sandell Berg, 1832–1903, sts. 1, 3; Gracia Grindal, b. 1943, st. 2; tr. composite
Music: BRED DINA VIDA VINGAR, Swedish folk tune
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A Time of Prayer and Meditation

Take as much time as you would like to stay and pray. The sanctuary will be available for as long as you might need.

Procession of Light

As you leave, feel free to light a votive candle in memory of someone who has died or in hope for the days ahead.



ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

Middletown, MD

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