



CHRIST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH
MILFORD

April 26, 2020
3rd Sunday of Easter

LOVE IN THE TIME OF CORONAVIRUS

Responding to Coronavirus as individual Christians:

Be Wise: Practice good hygiene and cleanliness. If you're sick, stay home, and take an abundance of caution. Regularly wash your hands. Make wise decisions about travel, avoid large events. Consult the CDC for more information on how to prepare and be safe.

Be Calm: In Philippians 4 Paul says that in times of uncertainty and suffering we should be “anxious for nothing.” When he wrote those words, he was following Jesus’ lead (Matthew 6.25-34) in reminding us that our hope in this world is not in human economies, or medicine, or technology, or cleanliness. Our hope is in Lord, the maker of Heaven and Earth (Psalm 121). So, if you're feeling anxious or afraid over the coming weeks, remember that the God who watches over you is a God who does not slumber or sleep. He promises that He will watch over your life; your coming in and going out both now and forevermore.

Be thoughtful: Keep in mind that certain people will be impacted more than others: Be aware of those who may be “shut-in” and alone. Take a moment to think about people who might inadvertently become “invisible” and be intentional about reaching out to them.

- Be aware of our older generation and the risks that are more relevant to them as related to the virus. Be intentional about checking up with them.
- Be aware of our neighbors, especially those who may be alone and/or have special needs in this context. This is a moment when the love and mercy of Christ can shine through you!
- Local businesses can absorb losses from people staying home less than big national chains. If you are able buy stuff from them, do so.
- People who work on hourly wages and those who rely on tips will probably be hurt more than those on salary. Be aware of who is confronting this and find ways to help.
- Health care workers: lots of people will be showing up at hospitals etc. to be checked or treated. Nurses, doctors and support staff will be pulling multiple extra shifts. Write them notes. Let them know how thankful you are for them.

Be Prayerful: Scripture teaches that Prayer is action and when it is done through faith in Christ, the Lord can use it to move mountains and heal diseases. Therefore, let's join together during this time to pray for the Lord to guide our officials, equip our medical professionals, comfort the sick, shield the healthy, and arrest this virus from causing more harm.

Historically, Christians have been known as people of love and compassion in times of disease and illness. When smallpox came to Rome most fled to the countryside, while Christians remained in the city to care for the sick and needy. When Romans evicted their infected loved ones out of their homes, Christians were the ones who invited them in to care for them. Of course, we want to proceed with caution and wisdom in the days to come. Yet, the Church has had some of her finest moments in situations like this. Let's pray and look for opportunities to be the Presence of Christ in Milford, His means of responding with love and grace to this crisis.

REFLECTION

Celebrating the Risen Christ as the Resurrection Community of Prayer

The new human community Jesus created in dying and rising
bears witness to its Lord
before a world in need of the Good News.
But it also prays.
Because of his victory, achieved at the cross
and ratified in the empty tomb,
we seek the King's face in prayer—
not in the vestibule but in the throne room;
not as foreigners
but as intimate allies of the Conquering Prince
who is making all things new.
Shout prayers of praise to the risen Christ!
Ask his grace and his help
for our wounds, our fears, our needs.
Ascribe to him the thanks he deserves
for every good thing he's given the world,
and seek his face for those promises yet unfulfilled.

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SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

Advent + Christmas + Epiphany + Lent + Easter + Pentecost

Gathering Hymn Worship Christ the Risen King

— God + calls + cleanses + speaks + strengthens + sends —

Chords: F Bb, F7 Bb, Eb, Bb, Gm, F7, Bb

1. Rise, O church, and lift your voic-es, Christ has con- quered death and hell.
 2. See the tomb where death had laid him, emp- ty now, its mouth de- clares:
 3. Hear the earth pro- test and trem- ble, see the stone re- moved with pow'r;
 4. Doubt may lift its head to mur- mur, scoff- ers mock and sin- ners jeer;
 5. We ac- claim your life, O Je- sus, now we sing your vic- to- ry;

Chords: Bb, F7, Gm, D, Gm, D, Gm, F, C7, F

Sing as all the earth re- joic- es; res- ur- rec- tion an- thems swell.
 "Death and I could not con- tain him, for the throne of life he shares."
 • all hell's min- ions may as- sem- ble, but can- not with- stand his hour.
 but the truth pro- claims a won- der thought- ful hearts re- ceive with cheer.
 sin or hell may seek to seize us, but your con- quest keeps us free.

Chords: F, Bb7, Eb, Cm, Dm, Cm, Gm, Bb, F7, Bb

Come and wor- ship, come and wor- ship, wor- ship Christ, the ris- en King!
 Come and wor- ship, come and wor- ship, wor- ship Christ, the ris- en King!
 • He has con- quered, he has con- quered, Christ the Lord, the ris- en King!
 He is ris- en, he is ris- en, now re- ceive the ris- en King!
 Stand in tri- umph, stand in tri- umph, wor- ship Christ, the ris- en King!

Call to Worship Jonah 2:1-2, 7, 9b:

Then Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from the belly of the fish, saying,

“I called out to the LORD, out of my distress,

and he answered me;

out of the belly of Sheol I cried,

and you heard my voice

When my life was fainting away,

I remembered the LORD,

and my prayer came to you, into your holy temple.

With the voice of thanksgiving I will sacrifice to you;

what I have vowed I will pay.

Salvation belongs to the LORD!

Invocation

Praise Hymn Lift high the name of Jesus

Lift high the name of Jesus, Of Jesus our King.

Make known the power of His grace, The beauty of His peace.

Remember how His mercy reached; And we cried out to Him.

He lifted us to solid ground, To freedom from our sin.

Chorus

Oh sing my soul, And tell all He's done,

Till the earth and heavens are filled with His glory!

Lift high the name of Jesus, Of Jesus our Lord.

His power in us is greater than, Is greater than this world.

To share the reason for our hope, To serve with love and grace,

That all who see Him shine through us, Might bring the Father praise.

Chorus

Lift high the name of Jesus, Of Jesus our Light.

No other name on earth can save, Can raise a soul to life.

He opens up our eyes to see The harvest He has grown.

We labor in His fields of grace As He leads sinners home.

Chorus

Confession of Sin

Confession Hymn Psalm 130 (1st verse)

From depths of woe I raise to Thee
The voice of lamentation
Lord turn a gracious ear to me
And hear my supplication
If Thou iniquities dost mark
Our secret sins and misdeeds dark
O who shall stand before Thee

Prayer of Confession

O Spirit, I have grieved you.
I have not had the courage to live by faith,
To trust that Christ has become my righteousness.
I have tried to be my own righteousness;
And for fear of sinning, I have been afraid to live.
I am anxiety ridden about my weakness.
I am bent on avoiding sin – not out of love for Christ,
but because I do not like to be wrong.
And afraid of hoping for too little of your power,
I have demanded too much for this life.
I am easily intimidated by the spiritual victories of others,
too often running from teacher to teacher
searching for secrets of spiritual success.
I have not set my sights on the life to come.
I live too much with the present struggles and temptations
and not in the joy of the Lord,
Who has paid all that I owe You.
I do not live enough for the Day,
when what is mortal in me shall be swallowed up by Life.
Oh spirit of Christ, have mercy on me. Amen.

Absolution Isaiah 53:4–5

Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows;
yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.
But he was pierced for our transgressions;
 he was crushed for our iniquities;
upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,
 and with his wounds we are healed.

Thanksgiving Hymn

Psalm 130 (verses 2-5)

To wash away the crimson stain
Grace grace alone availeth
Our works alas are all in vain
In much the best life faileth
No man can glory in Thy sight
All must alike confess Thy might
And live alone by mercy

Therefore my trust is in the Lord
And not in mine own merit
On Him my soul shall rest
His word upholds my fainting spirit
His promised mercy is my fort
My comfort and my sweet support
I wait for it with patience

What though I wait the live-long night
And till the dawn appeareth
My heart still trusteth in His might
It doubteth not nor feareth
Do thus O ye of Israel's seed
Ye of the Spirit born indeed
And wait till God appeareth

Though great our sins and sore our woes
His grace much more aboundeth
His helping love no limit knows
Our utmost need it soundeth
Our shepherd good and true is He
Who will at last our Israel free
For all their sin and sorrow

Epistle Lesson Acts 12:1-17

Peace of Christ

The peace of the Lord be with you!
And also with you!

Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow!
Praise Him, all creatures here below!
Praise Him above, you heavenly host!
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! Amen!

— God + calls + cleanses + speaks + strengthens + sends —

Old Testament Lesson I Kings 18:25–38

Gospel Lesson Luke 24:36-53

This is the Word of the Lord!
Thanks be to God!

Sermon Resurrection on a germ level | Pastor Curran Bishop

Response Hymn Hail the Day that Sees Him Rise

1. Hail the day that sees him rise Al - le - lu - ia!
 2. There for him high tri - umph waits; Al - le - lu - ia!
 3. See, he lifts his hands a - bove! Al - le - lu - ia!
 4. Lord, be - yond our mor - tal sight, Al - le - lu - ia!

to his throne a - bove the skies; Al - le - lu - ia!
 lift your heads, e - ter - nal gates, Al - le - lu - ia!
 See, he shows the prints of love! Al - le - lu - ia!
 raise our hearts to reach thy height; Al - le - lu - ia!

Christ, the Lamb for sin - ners giv'n, Al - le - lu - ia!
 he hath con - quered death and sin, Al - le - lu - ia!
 Hark! his gra - cious lips be - stow Al - le - lu - ia!
 there thy face un - cloud - ed see, Al - le - lu - ia!

en - ters now the high - est heav'n. Al - le - lu - ia!
 take the King of glo - ry in! Al - le - lu - ia!
 bless - ings on his church be - low. Al - le - lu - ia!
 find our heav'n of heav'ns in thee! Al - le - lu - ia!

Bringing Our Life to God

Profession | Collection | Prayers

Confession of Faith

From the Westminster Larger Catechism, Q. 178-185

What is prayer?

Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God, in the name of Christ, by the help of his Spirit; with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgement of his mercies.

What is it to pray in the name of Christ?

To pray in the name of Christ is, in obedience to his command, and in confidence on his promises, to ask mercy for his sake; not by bare mentioning of his name, but by drawing our encouragement to pray, and our boldness, strength, and hope of acceptance in prayer, from Christ and his mediation.

How doth the Spirit help us to pray?

We not knowing what to pray for as we ought, the Spirit helps our infirmities, by enabling us to understand both for whom, and what, and how prayer is to be made; and by working and quickening in our hearts (although not in all persons, nor at all times, in the same measure) those apprehensions, affections, and graces which are requisite for the right performance of that duty.

For whom and what are we to pray?

We are to pray for the whole church of Christ upon earth; for magistrates, and ministers; for ourselves, our brethren, yea, our enemies; and for all sorts of men living, or that shall live hereafter; We are to pray for all things tending to the glory of God, the welfare of the church, our own or others' good;

How are we to pray?

We are to pray with full apprehension of the majesty of God, and deep sense of our own unworthiness, necessities, and sins; with penitent, thankful, and enlarged hearts; with understanding, faith, sincerity, fervency, love, and perseverance, waiting upon him, with humble submission to his will.

Prayers of the People

Collection

Alleluia

The image shows a musical score for the Alleluia. It consists of two systems of music. The first system has three staves: Alto (top), Tenor (middle), and Bass (bottom). The Alto part starts with a dynamic marking of *f* and the word *Alto*. The Tenor part starts with a dynamic marking of *f* and the word *Tenor*. The Bass part starts with a dynamic marking of *f* and the word *Bass*. The lyrics are: "Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Al -". The second system also has three staves. The lyrics are: "le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. ia.". Above the second system, there are two boxes: the first box contains "1, Final (1st time: D.C.) Fine" and the second box contains "2 to Verse". The music is in 6/8 time and G major.

Communion in Christ Jesus

All Christians are invited to join us to receive Christ's presence of bread and wine. During this time of social distancing we offer for our pastor to come and bless your partaking of elements you provide to preserve the corporate-presence of Christ pictured in the supper as best we can. If you've been part of our streaming service please text Curran (203-812-9928) to set up a time he can meet you (from a distance) to celebrate communion.

Communion Hymn He Will Hold Me Fast

When I fear my faith will fail
Christ will hold me fast
When the tempter would prevail
He will hold me fast
I could never keep my hold
Through life's fearful path
For my love is often cold
He must hold me fast

Chorus

He will hold me fast
He will hold me fast
For my Savior loves me so
He will hold me fast

Those He saves are His delight
Christ will hold me fast
Precious in His holy sight
He will hold me fast
He'll not let my soul be lost
His Promises shall last
Bought by Him at such a cost
He will hold me fast

Chorus

For my life He bled and died
Christ will hold me fast
Justice has been satisfied
He will hold me fast
Raised with Him to endless life
He will hold me fast
Till our faith is turned to sight
When He comes at last

Chorus

Lamentation

Prayer for those searching:

Oh God, I am discovering that the more I have, the more I need to have, the more I am loved, the more I need to be loved, the more I achieve, the more I need to achieve. Nothing seems to satisfy me. Could it be, as someone once said, that "Our hearts are restless until they find their rest in thee." Dear God, if this is true, and if as the Bible teaches there is life and life eternal in Christ alone, please guide me to Him. Open me to the reality of the One who alone can satisfy my restless heart. Give me the courage to believe that which I cannot see but can understand, feel and touch through the Word, sacraments and church family. Lord I want to believe, help my unbelief! Amen.

— God + calls + cleanses + speaks + strengthens + sends —

Report from our sister congregations Bishop Francis Karemera

Benediction

Coronation Hymn Crown Him with Many Crowns

Announcements

1. Crown him with man - y crowns, the Lamb up - on his throne;
 2. Crown him the Lord of love; be - hold his hands and side,
 3. Crown him the Lord of peace; whose pow'r a scep - ter sways
 4. Crown him the Lord of years, the Po - ten - tate of time;

hark! how the heav'n - ly an - them drowns all mu - sic but its own:
 rich wounds, yet vis - i - ble a - bove, in beau - ty glo - ri - fied:
 from pole to pole, that wars may cease, ab - sorbed in prayer and praise:
 Cre - a - tor of the roll - ing spheres, in - ef - fa - bly sub - lime:

a - wake, my soul, and sing of him who died for thee,
 no an - gel in the sky can ful - ly bear that sight,
 his reign shall know no end; and round his pierc - ed feet
 all hail, Re - deem - er, hail! for thou hast died for me:

and hail him as thy match - less King through all e - ter - ni - ty.
 but down - ward bends his burn - ing eye at mys - ter - ies so bright.
 fair flow'rs of par - a - dise ex - tend their fra - grance ev - er sweet.
 thy praise shall nev - er, nev - er fail through - out e - ter - ni - ty.

REFLECTION

Resurrection and Prayer

The story is quite clear: in the garden at Gethsemane the Father said “No” to his Son’s prayer to be rescued from the horrific agony of the atoning cross. But three days later, in the cemetery garden where Jesus’ dead body had been buried, God raised his Son to a life-beyond-death existence, thereby revealing that his “No” to the Son’s prayer for help was really a “Yes—but not that way.” And so, the great messianic Psalm 22 proclaims triumphantly concerning the Father’s response to his Son’s prayer:

**For he has not despised or disdained
the suffering of the afflicted one;
he has not hidden his face from him
but has listened to his cry for help.** (Psalm 22:24)

The resurrection of Jesus, therefore, becomes the Great Guarantee that God hears our prayers and will not, finally, hand us over to anything that would ruin us. God rescued his Son not around the cross but through it.

I’ve always regarded myself as among the “O ye of midget-faith” when it comes to prayer, but I’m finding that the older I get, the more I want to pray and the more I do pray. Yet the struggle remains what it always has been for me: my faith heats up when I quite easily imagine what God **could** do in my life and in the lives of others I pray for and in the church and in the world, given his sovereign power over things. But then it dawns on me that so many times God hasn’t granted what I and so many others have asked for. How can I be confident that my prayers will affect what he **will** do now in this or that situation? We asked him to heal Cheryl Cook of ALS—and he didn’t. I *can’t* be very confident—so my jets start cooling. The childlike expectation of receiving something good and the excitement at “watching the Lord work” evaporates. I keep praying but the confidence that God will really act into the situation seems to have evaporated. How can I believe God for something really specific I pray for when time and time again he has demonstrated that his ways are above me, past finding out?

But if it’s true that the resurrection of the Son, in some deep and powerful way, marks the formal beginning of the fulfillment of the promise of him who calls himself Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, “**Behold, I am making all things new**” (Revelation 21:5), then I must pray on, and put my confidence not in the number of specific prayers God answers for me—which easily turns into a “he loves me, he loves me not” kind of thing—but in God’s actual desire and determination to make all things new. He has set the resurrected Christ before you and me as the first installment of a New Creation. And everywhere in the world he’s at work, as we were so wonderfully reminded at House Church Wednesday night in the report on the progress of the gospel in Ukraine. God is serious about what he has promised us. And when we contemplate that, we will find—even though the devil uses our unanswered prayers to douse it—the fire of our faith and confidence in God heating up again.

– Ron Lutjens, St. Louis, Missouri

WE ARE A LOCAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Local

We are a church in and for our community. We want to celebrate its goodness, serve its specific needs, and work towards the flourishing of all its citizens. We worship in the voice of our community and seek to be a church that grows organically out of our neighborhoods. We are committed to working for the common good. We look to serve, not to be served. We look to give, not to take. We are eager to bless others because we have been blessed by God.

Presbyterian

Being Presbyterian means we are led by elders and connected with other churches. This provides accountability, oversight, and produces real pastoral care. We are part of the Reformed Tradition which teaches that God knows us intimately and enables us to know Him intimately. We believe that life in relationship with God is not only possible but vibrant. That God is the initiator of this relationship and the whole is based on grace and forgiveness offered to us in the being and action of Jesus Christ.

Church

We believe that church is not an event or a program but rather a family. A place where you no longer have to choose between being really known or really loved. Within the family of God we don't need to perform in order to be accepted. We no longer relate to each other based upon our past failures or future potential but rather we relate to each other as brothers and sisters who have been loved by God in Christ!

COMING UP

Sunday Night Community Group

While we typically meet on Sunday evenings from 5-7pm in each other's homes for fellowship, to eat and drink together, study Scripture and pray for each other, our community, and our world, this meeting will not take place today due to the coronavirus response.

Commissioning Service

Has been postponed until after the coronavirus response.

Public Launch Celebration

Bear with us – this is a “soft launch”! Our public launch celebration has also been postponed until after the coronavirus response.

Contact us

203.812.9928 or curran.bishop@cpcmilford.org; find us on Facebook at facebook.com/CPCMilford or visit us online at cpcmilford.org



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