



Week Four; April 13-19
Theme: Forgiveness

*³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴ even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love ⁵ he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. ⁷ **In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, ⁸ which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight ⁹ making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. Ephesians 1:3-10***

He is Risen! He is Risen indeed! Alleluia! We have been waiting a long time to be able to say those words! We packed our Alleluias away on Transfiguration Sunday and we entered the contrite season of Lent. We received ashes on our heads; “From dust you came...to dust you shall return.” We were reminded that on our own, we are sinful and there is no good in us. We then made that journey from the Mount of Transfiguration to the entrance of Jerusalem with nothing but a contrite heart and a forehead marked in ash with the cross of Christ.

We witnessed our Lord enter Jerusalem to the waving of palm branches and the cries of Hosanna, “Lord, we beg you to save us now!” Those words take on a different meaning this Holy Week. “Lord, save us” are not just words of remembrance in another Holy Week. We don’t just ask for Him to deliver us from the bondage of our sin, but now, from the bondage of this virus, this plague that has imprisoned all of us to our homes.

What we witnessed yesterday, Easter Sunday, was the power of God’s Word, a power that sin, death, and Satan cannot overthrow, a power that this deadly pandemic is no match for. The Word of God was proclaimed and heard in homes, parking lots, and health care centers all over the world; words of redemption and forgiveness, earned at the cross...and confirmed at the empty tomb!

Let us this week lift up contrite hearts to the throne of our Heavenly Father, imploring Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to forgive us all our sins. May He give us the strength and courage to forgive our neighbor and to find a peace in His forgiveness that goes beyond all understanding.

He is Risen! He is Risen Indeed! Alleluia!

***Jesus sinners doth receive; Oh, may all this saying ponder.
Who in sin's delusions live and from God and heaven wander!
Here is hope for all who grieve; Jesus sinners doth receive.***

LSB 609:1

Prayer suggestions – You can use these or lift up your own. We encourage you to pray these prayers each day. In addition, we urge you to add the names of those printed at the bottom of the page. These are individuals connected in some way to the ministries of Berea and Agape Hill. If you would like someone added to the list, make sure they approve having their name included and email the information to Pastor Jeff.

Monday – Harbor old wounds/withholding forgiveness: Risen Lord Jesus, I ask with Peter of old: “How often must I forgive those who sin against me and offend me?” O Lord, if I am to forgive seventy times seven, then You must give me the grace and will to do so. My sinful heart is resentful and often filled with bitterness against others. So often I have been hurt and sinned against. I must confess to You, Lord of the Church, that I do not find it easy to forgive and forget. O Lord, have mercy on me.

I know that You have forgiven me times without number. That is why I come to You and Your throne of grace asking for Your mercy and help. Enable me in all sincerity of heart to say as You did on the cross, “Father, forgive them;”)” and then help me to forgive as You have forgiven me more than seventy times seven. I pray this in Your precious name. Amen.

***We deserve but grief and shame, yet His words, rich grace revealing.
Pardon, peace, and life proclaim; here our ills have perfect healing.
Firmly in these words believe; Jesus sinners doth receive.***

LSB 609:2

Tuesday – Joy and a Clean Heart: Dearest Heavenly Father, who delights in a clean heart, I do not come relying on my personal righteousness, but trusting solely in the merits of Your beloved Son, my Redeemer, Jesus Christ. For His sake forgive me my sins. Create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me. Remove from my mind all evil desires. Cast out from my life all greed and envy, all anger and hatred, all pride and vanity. Spare me from an accusing conscience. Fill my soul with joy and love for You and a spirit of service to all people. Grant me strength to resist and overcome temptation. Clothe me with the garment of righteousness that Jesus won for me on Calvary. Thank you Lord for your unconditional love and forgiveness. Cause me to grow in grace before You and to increase in works of love as long as I live. And when my life comes to a close, give me a place with You in heavenly glory.

***Sheep that from the fold did stray no true shepherd e'er forsaketh;
Weary souls that lost their way; Christ, the Shepherd, gently taketh.
In His arms that they may live; Jesus sinners doth receive.***

LSB 609:3

Wednesday – Guilt or Peace: Heavenly Father, it is to Your Father-heart that I come today, seeking peace of heart and mind. I am distressed and perturbed, irritated and worried. I am dissatisfied with myself and the world around me. The panic and fear of this pandemic, the isolation of this virus, the uncertainty of what comes next has created great anxiety and even guilt. My sinful heart is rebellious, my day is filled with envy and my feelings are so easily hurt. I know, O Lord, that I am at fault. I have not opened my heart to You, nor have I given service and consideration to those with whom I live in my home and whom You surround me with. Everything annoys me, I must confess. My heart has no peace. O God, I admit that it is I, my sins, my lovelessness, which create these situations. Therefore, I come to You, asking You for Your grace to provide peace to my heart and mind. Restore to me the desire to walk in Your presence, and let me live in the sunshine of Your love.

Forgive me all my sins, and fill my soul with peace. Go with me, Lord, through the day, put my mind at ease, and speak peace to my soul through that reconciliation which is found only in the cross of Your beloved Son, Jesus. It is in the powerful name of the Prince of Peace that I pray this petition. Amen.

"I lay my sins on Jesus, the spotless Lamb of God;
He bears them all and frees us From the accursed load.
I bring my guilt to Jesus To wash my crimson stains
Clean in His blood most precious Till not a spot remains" (LSB 606:1). Amen

***I a sinner, come to Thee with a penitent confession.
Savior, mercy show to me; grant for all my sins remission.
Let these words my soul relieve: Jesus sinners doth receive.
LSB 609:4***

Thursday – Comfort from bitterness and frustration: Gracious God, who searches the hearts of all people and knows all of their thoughts, “create in me a clean heart, O god, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation and uphold me with a willing spirit.”

Teach me to say with the psalmist: “Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise Him, my Help and my God.” “Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any wicked way in me in the way everlasting.”

If my frustration arise from a rebellious and dissatisfied heart, forgive me, Lord. If my restlessness arises from my failure to look to You for rest, teach me to come to Jesus with my cares and lay them at His feet. Lord when I am bitter and want to hurt and get back at those who have done wrong to me, I pray your guidance to help me "Let Go" of all bitterness and find the comfort of our Living Savior's Love. May I not seek vengeance or remain a victim to sin but look to the comfort of Jesus' loving arms. "But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Corinthians 15:57. If You are testing me, give me the strength to endure my test, for You have carried the burden of my sins for me. Help me to know the godliness with contentment that comes from You alone, for Jesus sake, Amen.

***Oh, how blest it is to know; were as scarlet my transgression.
It shall be as white as snow by Thy blood and bitter passion;
For these words I now believe; Jesus sinners doth receive.***

LSB 609:5

Friday – For Gratitude: O God, thank You for the saving faith in Jesus Christ, my Savior, and for the privilege of being called one of your children. Give me a deep and abiding faith, and grant me the grace to show in all my actions and in all dealings with others that You are the Ruler of my heart and mind and that the joy of salvation is the dominating influence in my life. May the unkindness in my heart turn to gratitude, thanksgiving and redemption, gifts given by Your Son, on the cross. By His wounds we are healed. Keep me from becoming discouraged by the troubles and cares of this life, and make me trusting, cheerful, and confident. At the same time keep me humble always in the knowledge that salvation is from You and that heaven is Your gift.

In gratitude for the salvation which you give, help me to live and die in the spirit of the psalmist: "I will extol Thee, my God and King and bless thy name forever and ever...great is the Lord and greatly to be praised, and His greatness is unsearchable. One generation shall laud Thy works to another and shall declare Thy mighty acts. On the glorious splendor of Thy majesty and on Thy wondrous works I will meditate...The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. The Lord is good to all and his compassion is over all that He has made...My mouth will speak of the praise of the Lord, and let all flesh bless His holy name forever and ever. In the name of our Savior, Jesus. Amen.

***Now my conscience is at peace; from the Law I stand acquitted.
Christ hath purchased my release and my ev'ry sin remitted.
Naught remains my soul to grieve; Jesus sinners doth receive.***

LSB 609:6

Saturday – Hope: Risen and Glorious Savior you are our **HOPE** today and always! Because of your death on the cross our salvation is secure. "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope." Romans 15:13 May we audaciously with great excitement never cease to share the love of our risen King of Kings. "My hope is built on nothing less that Jesus blood and righteousness. No merit of my own I claim, but wholly lean on Jesus' name. On Christ, the solid rock I stand all other ground is sinking sand." Almighty, everlasting God, Your Son has assured forgiveness of sins and deliverance from eternal death. Strengthen us by Your Holy Spirit that our faith in Christ may increase daily and that we may hold fast to the hope that on the Last Day we shall be raised in glory to eternal life. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

***Jesus sinners doth receive; Also I have been forgiven;
And when I this world must leave, I shall find an open heaven.
Dying, still to Him I cleave; Jesus sinners doth receive.***

LSB 609:7

Lord's Prayer: *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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.*

**Just as I am, without one plea but that Thy blood was shed for me
And that thou bidd'st me come to Thee, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.**

**Just as I am and waiting not to rid my soul of one dark blot,
To Thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.**

**Just as I am, though tossed about with many a conflict, many a doubt,
Fightings and fears within, without, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.**

**Just as I am, poor, wretched blind; sight, riches, healing of the mind,
Yea, all I need, in Thee to find, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.**

**Just as I am, Thou wilt receive, wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
Because Thy promise I believe, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.**

**Just as I am; Thy love unknown has broken every barrier down;
Now to be Think, yea, Thine alone, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.**

LSB 570

Some wise advice for this time of quarantine...

Healthy daily to do list:

1. Thank God for something the He has given you.
2. Smile it brightens our lives!
3. PRAY!

What do you think of this thought by Ann Voskamp? "Is there any word more powerful than giving? Thanksgiving. Forgiving. Care-giving. Life-giving. Everything that matters in living comes down to giving."

Parish Nurse Joanie Kolton, Family Connections Director

PRAYER REQUESTS as of the date of the printing: *Welcome! It is not by accident that our Lord has led us here to this moment. We pray with you for His guidance and encouragement as we strive to be His disciples and share the message of salvation with others. Amen.*

Cancer: *Carol Spatzek, breast, Judy Branson, breast, Tom Brueckner, prostate, Julia Grau, granddaughter of Chet & Marge Grau, eye, Eli Kessler, great nephew of the Heckerts, leukemia, Kathy Schmid, aunt of Robin Mueller, liver, Randy Clinard, former Berea member, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, Gordy Fabry, cousin of Pastor Jeff, Sharon Beay, step-sister of Ray Leidy, eye melanoma, Ron Schroeder, former member, Stem-cell transplant T-Cell lymphoma, Diane, friend of Shannon Biedenbender (former member), lung,*

Hospice: *Carol Timme, The Kathy House, West Bend, Linda, Dearest friend of Sally Goelz (Agape Hill), brain tumor/cancer, Bill Schoeller one of our Luther Manor bible study and church regulars, Luther Manor*

Rehabilitation: *Lorraine Biang, Luther Manor, fall, George DeJarlais, Terry's husband, heart surgery, home*

Ongoing needs: *Maxine Dudley, severe back pains, Lane Branson, multiple health challenges, Lavonne Biedenbender, multiple health concerns, Steve Biedenbender, lung disease, Henry Klaves, epilepsy, Irm Tewes, Luther Manor Monday attendee, severe and continuous pain, Mady, daughter of Megan Wylie's friend, torn ACL, Shirley McMahon, Aunt of Robin Mueller, fall*

Homebound: *Rev. Richard Borchers, Lutheran Home, Dorothy Britton Brookdale Assisted Living, Rose Eisner Home, Elinor Heitman Harwood Place,*

Birthdays: *4/14 Bob Bergmann*

Anniversaries: *4/16 Barry and Kathy Mimis, 4/18 Steve and Tanya Strackbein*

If there are any additional names you would like to see added to our prayer list or if we have forgotten someone, please email Pastor Jeff at jmueller47@yahoo.com