



WINTER 2021 Issue No. 13
Stories of God at work in our lives

ANASTASIS | **ἀνάστασις**
[Greek for 'Resurrection' or 'Rising Up']



PHOTO CREDITS: Cover—Karen Hendricks, this page—Holly Hoffman

..... *Anastasis is a quarterly publication of*

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Thank you for reading this issue! Our congregation seeks to be a loving presence in the community and to boldly share the Good News of God at work in the world. We are called to action in response to the grace God bestows on us. The stories in this issue are recent examples of times we have experienced God in our lives. We invite you to encounter Jesus each Sunday morning in worship (both online and onsite following social distancing protocols) or through any other of the programs and events listed throughout this publication.

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A Few Ways to Receive & Respond. God works through each of us and uses us to help each other.

⁹ At that place he came to a cave, and spent the night there.

Then the word of the LORD came to him, saying, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" ¹⁰ He answered, "I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away."

¹¹ He said, "Go out and stand on the mountain before the LORD, for the LORD is about to pass by." Now there was a great wind, so strong that it was splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake; ¹² and after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of sheer silence. ¹³ When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. Then there came a voice to him that said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

THIS ISSUE'S SCRIPTURE FOCUS:

1 Kings 19: 9-13a (NRSV)

PRAYER & MINDFULNESS

In A Year of Healing

Welcome to the Winter 2021 edition of *Anastasis*. The theme for this year is healing ... and boy, do we need it. Regardless of

whether we are talking about healing in the midst of pandemic or healing from great divide and division, healing is so very needed. Our special focus for this edition is on healing through prayer and mindfulness. These are not easy topics in our culture, mostly because so many people feel they don't know how to pray and they struggle with mindfulness.

This is your opportunity to take a few moments and practice. That's right, practice



PHOTO CREDIT: Zac Durant for UNSPLASH.

prayer. Practice mindfulness. If this is your first time, take a stab at it. Try something new. Fail even. Just know that you are

in a safe environment to try. And to try again. And again. Because we never really become experts at prayer or mindfulness. And we aren't called to either. We're called to just talk with God – no different than if I'm talking with you. And mindfulness is a gift. It allows us to pay attention to what God is already up to in our lives and around us.

I hope you enjoy this edition and find it healing.

A handwritten signature in orange ink, reading "P. Matthew Best". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent "P." at the beginning.

Pastor Matthew Best

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

by Rev. Matthew Best

“What are you doing here, Elijah?” That is the question God asks Elijah when he is in the midst of running for his life from the king and queen who are hunting him down to kill him. Talk about a stressful situation. I can feel the anxiety just thinking about the context. The stress of fleeing to survive must have been immense.

And, in the midst of that, God asks Elijah, “What are you doing here?” He is hiding, that’s what he is doing. He is running. He is sulking and feeling sorry for himself. We hear it in his emotional response to God’s question (or what he thinks is a response to God’s question). Elijah says, “I have been very zealous for the Lord, the God of hosts; for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away.”

Nice try, but Elijah never really answered God’s question. Given the state of mind he was in, I’m not sure he could have really answered it. He is too wrapped up in the moment, with the adrena-

line rushing through him. He is in fight or flight mode and flight has kicked in.

So God does what God does best. God catches Elijah’s attention and breaks his concentration and focus. He sends Elijah out the entrance of the cave. A small task to do. There was a strong wind, strong enough to split mountains and break rocks. Then an earthquake. Then a fire. And then sheer silence.

All the forceful powers of nature are not where God was. Rather, God was in the sheer silence. Elijah recognized God in the silence, covered his face, and stood to listen to God. And God asked Elijah the same question – “Why are you here, Elijah?” Elijah gives the same answer but this time it seems different. This time, he hears God and recognizes that he is in the presence of the holy. Elijah wrapped his face, a sign that there was someone superior in his presence.

And then God gives Elijah a command: to go and then do three more tasks.

And Elijah does.

It is hard to heal from trauma when we are wrapped up in it. We can't heal when we are in the midst of great stress. The pandemic has been going on for almost a year, impacting our lives in significant ways. We can't heal until we take care of the virus and control the threat it poses. We can't heal from the deep partisan divide we face until we take care of the core beliefs and identities that hold people captive. Healing doesn't happen until we acknowledge what is happening. Covering up pain and suffering doesn't move us to healing. It only deepens the wound and makes us unhealthier. We have to deal with reality. Face the storms, recognize what they are, and honestly answer the question – "What are you doing here?"

We may not have an answer for that, much like Elijah didn't. And that's OK. Elijah didn't need the perfect answer. God was there anyway. God showed up. Not in a show of strength but in an unexpected

way: silence. It was in the silence that Elijah recognized God.

It is in silence that we can hear God better, more often than not. Silence moves us away from the moment of high energy. It breaks our attention and allows us to hear. It allows us to hear what is going on inside ourselves. It allows us to hear God. And it allows us to respond and to go as we are sent by God. Not with all the answers but through knowing that we are not alone, no matter what is going on.

What are *you* doing here? †

PHOTO CREDIT: Hanny Naibaho for UNSPLASH

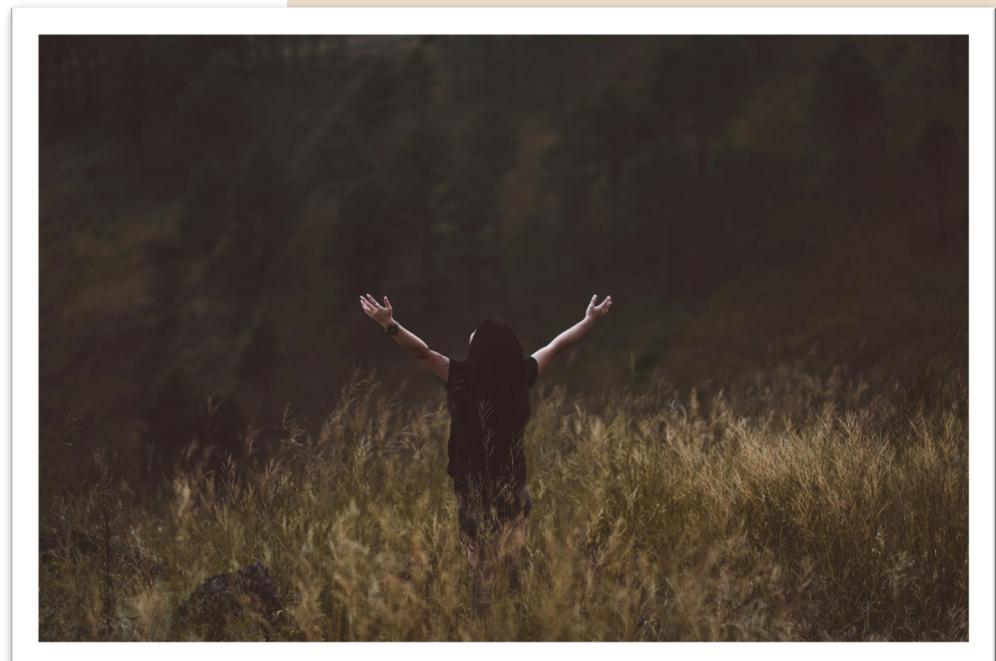




PHOTO CREDIT: Cristian Chavarria

SURROUNDED BY PRAYERS

by Caroline Sheaffer

Judith Viorst's children's book *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day* was one of my favorites to read to our children when they were young and later to our grandchildren. For those of you unfamiliar with its text, the first page begins:

*I went to sleep with gum in my mouth and now there's gum in my hair
And when I got out of bed this morning I tripped on the skateboard and
By mistake I dropped my sweater in the sink while the water was running
And I could tell it was going to be a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day.*

I think during 2020 every one of us can put our own words into Alexander's day. Mine would go something like:

*A minor surgery followed a major fall which laid me up all winter.
Cancelled two trips; basement flooded; extraction, mitigation, and reconstruction
Leaks in the floor from the refrigerator, followed by the drips from the washer.
COVID-19 turned pneumonia. No hugs with kids or grandkids.
I could tell it was going to be a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad year!*

I am truly blessed. I survived all these minor issues when so many others passed away from COVID-19 or strokes or lie lonely in nursing care facilities longing for human contact. Were it not for being surrounded by prayers and kindnesses of family and friends checking in with me constantly to lift my spirits, I may be in a far different state of mind than I am now, mostly recovered.

These people have been my cheerleaders and my worriers, my steadfast friends and family offering anything I needed

whether I knew I needed it or not. They knew I would be unable to cook Thanksgiving dinner, so it arrived at my doorstep. They knew I would be unable to bake Christmas cookies, and two tins of them appeared. Nutritious, delicious home-cooked meals appeared from friends and the church. An oximeter to check my pulse/oxygen level was offered when I didn't even know what it was. Shoveling a path through the snow around the house by hand in the dark for workers to get materials downstairs goes above and beyond. Having no energy to decorate a Christmas tree this year, two treasured hand-made decorations came in the mail. Creative ideas arrived by mail, a teabag and an invitation for me to join a friend in a cup of tea. Sending me computer games to entertain me while I rested, pointing out a virtual Christmas concert, and several college educational webinars were all wonderful forms of entertainment. Deliveries of two Christmas plants appeared and brightened the day. Groceries continue to be delivered, as well as other errands being run. The texts, phone calls, emails, cards, and letters to check on me frequently and offer advice mean the world to me.

Their prayers mean even more. Prayers were repeatedly offered for me from around the world – El Salvador, Spain, the Netherlands, Germany, Ecuador. They were my virtual caregivers. Our scholarship students and pastors in El Salvador have been faithfully praying for me and regu-



& KINDNESS

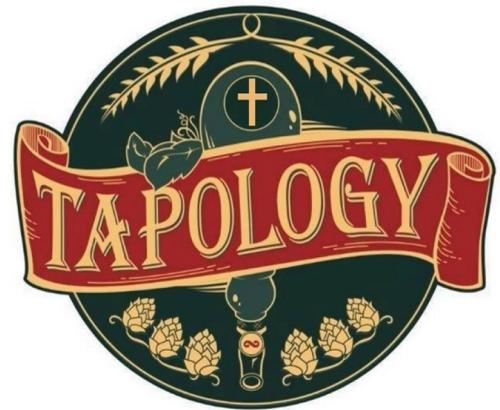
larly sending kind thoughts as well as creative ways to express it. Group “shout outs” from the scholarship kids, albeit in Spanish, always bring a smile. When one of our Salvadoran pastors contracted COVID-19, he asked for support and reassurance to get through the virus. Soon he sent me several photos of lovely bright tropical flowers from his yard AND two audio links to hymns he was practicing on his keyboard after he began to feel better. How can you NOT be uplifted by nature and music sent 3200 miles away?!

Viorst’s book *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, Very Bad Day* ends like this:

*When I went to bed Nick took back the pillow he said I could keep
and the Mickey Mouse night light burned out and I bit my tongue.
The cat wants to sleep with Anthony, not with me.
It has been a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day.
My mom says some days are like that.*

My version shall read:

*My family, biological and church, friends, local and international
Surround me with their caring, compassionate, creative acts of kindness
Uplifting me when I need it so that I can support them when they need it
Vaccines are right around the corner
This is going to be a Spirit-led, hope-filled, so good, very blessed year!*



TAPOLOGY, where we gather to talk about issues and theology that matters, has temporarily moved online. Visit our Facebook page for the latest information.

[Facebook.com/TapologyCarlisle](https://www.facebook.com/TapologyCarlisle)



Tapology was founded in 2017 by two local churches: St. Paul Lutheran Church in Carlisle and St. Stephen Lutheran Church in New Kingstown. Since then, more and more people have joined to enjoy food, alcoholic and nonalcoholic beverages, friendship, and fellowship. Each month, we discuss a different topic related to faith. We invite the questioners, the doubters, the believers, and all people from all walks of life, denominations, and faith traditions to join for this monthly event. Find details about upcoming events and more at:

[Facebook.com/TapologyCarlisle](https://www.facebook.com/TapologyCarlisle)

A SACRED JOURNEY

by Holly Hoffman, ELCA Deaconess and member, St. Paul Lutheran, Carlisle

A divorce. Moving three times in three months to avoid homelessness. Feeling like a failure as a spouse and a parent.

This is where I found myself near the turn of the millennium when I first went to Family Camp at Camp Nawakwa. And that is where I first encountered the labyrinth. I needed to have a serious conversation with God about who I was, why all this had happened, and where I was headed. So, I walked.

Did I get all the answers I was looking for in the labyrinth? No. The labyrinth has a funny way of leading you to discover what you need to hear instead of what you thought you wanted to hear. What I did come away with was the sense that God was present, that God still loved me ... and a reminder that God is in charge, not me or any other human.

Many years and many labyrinths later, I have come to believe the famous quote by Pierre Teilhard de Chardin: "We are not human beings having a spiritual experience. We are spiritual beings having a human experience." I have walked labyrinths in a good number of states and some in other countries. I am not sure what it is about the labyrinth that makes it so effective. Is it the feeling of being on a journey with a known endpoint and a clear way out? Is it the ability to move without planning, simply following the path, so that you can release anxiety and focus on your inner spirit? Is it the nature and beauty in which many labyrinths are located?

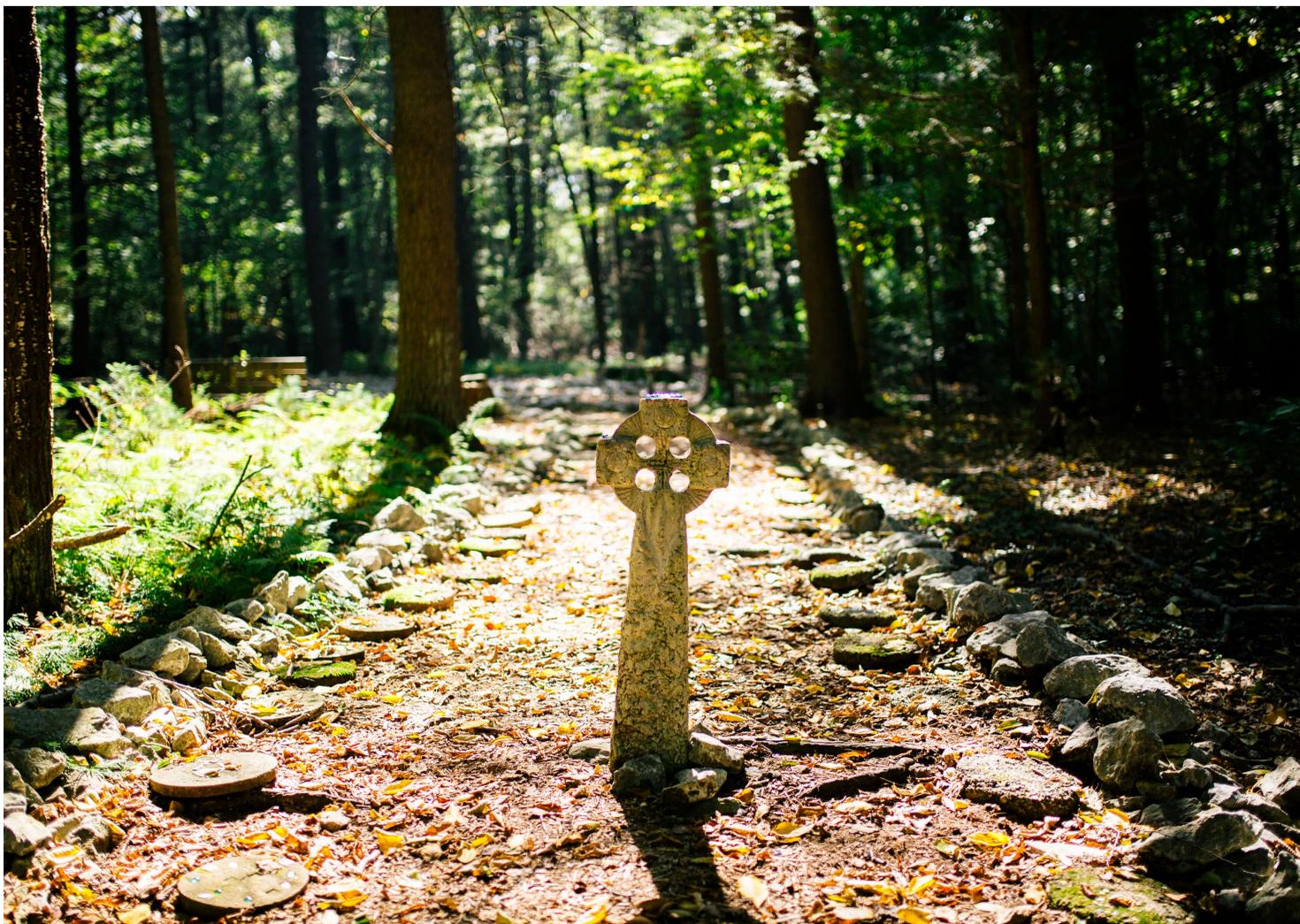


Probably the answer is “yes” to all of these, that they all add to the experience. Many believe that labyrinths are an example of sacred geometry ... the idea that nature is constructed with a geometric plan, lending beauty and predictability to the eye, not to mention a functionality: these sacred geometric shapes accommodate nature's growth so it can expand and develop unhindered as the pattern repeats itself.

The labyrinth is, for Christians, a form of “walking prayer.” There is no right or wrong way to walk one. Personally, I like to do it barefoot, to be able to directly feel the sensation of the path on my feet, to connect directly with the energy that is there. I use the journey toward the center to express my inner turmoil, to try to let go everything that has been burdening me. At the center I give thanks for the abundant gifts of God, especially for giving us his son, Jesus Christ. As I journey out, I try to silence my own thinking ... it is much easier to hear God when your mind isn't “talking.” That is the hardest part. I am not used to shutting my brain off and it takes conscious effort to pay attention only to the breeze, to my own breathing and heartbeat, to the sounds of nature, the trees and flowers, without letting thoughts happen. Effort and practice.

Sometimes I don't really hear much. Often, I get clarity ... but not necessarily about the questions I was asking. God often uses the labyrinth to make it clear that I was asking the wrong questions. What I consistently do come away with is a sense of peace and the certainty that I am not alone. I understand that I am part of a larger, intricate pattern that God is weaving. Those things alone make it well worth the journey.

Four years ago, I joined the board of a group that ultimately installed a labyrinth at Biddle Mission Park in Carlisle (<https://hollmom.wixsite.com/labyrinth>). I invite you to visit and try the labyrinth for yourself. It's a blessing to be able to share this sacred tool with others. I pray that others will heal through the same process that continues to help me work through my own



Currently ON HOLD due to pandemic safety precautions
ST STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH
30 WEST MAIN ST., NEW KINGSTOWN, PA 17072
Upcoming dates: TBD

*** While we are unable right now to host these delightful monthly meals, our congregation remains committed to helping the hungry. If you are in need, contact the church office at 717-766-2168.

spiritual angst in the midst of a typical, very messy human life. At the very least, it is healthy exercise and fresh air. But with practice, it is a connection to your own spirit ... and a way to connect your spirit to the Holy. †

St Stephen also has a small labyrinth onsite in the field beside our pavilion. It is available for personal use and is a great way to spend time with God during the restrictions of the pandemic.





PHOTO CREDIT: Simon Wilkes for UNSPLASH

AWARENESS FROM THE HEART

by Sally John

No one who works on a project likes to be restricted by finances. No one who manages a program wants to hear that it has to be discontinued or pared down due to lack of funds. It is no different with the Social Ministry committee. Over the last several years our programs have expanded dramatically, enabled in part by grants. Since last March, the need in our community has sky-rocketed due to the corona virus. More people are sick and unable to work. Those in the lower income brackets who were barely keeping their heads above water before the pandemic now struggle even harder to survive due to fewer work hours or because of being laid off indefinitely. And Social Ministry now faces the task of providing programs and services without our biggest fund-raising event, the Harvest Fest, which was cancelled due to the virus.

So how do we mindfully go about our business of ministry during this challenging time when there is *so much* need? People are not just looking for a monthly meal any more. They need to repair a roof so that snow doesn't drift down into their bedroom while they try to sleep. They need new tires for their car, which isn't just used for transportation to work and doctor's appointments, but serves as their only shelter. They need a new furnace that they can't afford. They need help paying for rent. These are big ticket necessities. During the months of Nov. and Dec. 2020 Social Ministry gave out an unprecedented \$12,000 in assistance.

As a committee we want to help everyone. We constantly grapple with trying to decide if the needs are legitimate and if we can afford to pay a particular bill. We have long conversations about whether we are getting into territory that is

beyond our ministry scope, whether we are distributing assistance equitably, and whether we are “helping” or merely providing a “crutch” that will turn into a dependence upon our continued support.

And so, mindfulness plays a huge role in our decision-making process. In researching the word, it seems there are three components to its meaning. To be mindful one must be aware and intentional. One must pay attention to what is happening in the present. And one must have a non-judgmental, caring attitude. The Japanese culture seems to sum it up better than anything I found in English. It uses three symbols (mind, heart, and now) which, when combined, represent mindfulness as “an awareness from the heart.”

In order for us to mindfully make difficult decisions, we try to prayerfully discern when it is appropriate for us to assist, and conversely, when to enforce boundaries. The development of partnerships has been one key strategy that has helped us immensely. Our relationship with the Cumberland Valley School District has enabled guidance counselors to refer families who have a legitimate need for support. Community Cares has also been very helpful in vetting the validity of needs that arise as well.

While financial support is an important part of helping our neighbors survive, we continue to also be mindful that people so crave a sense of non-judgmental communi-

ty. During the pandemic we have all been reminded that isolation and separation from community are indeed difficult things for human beings to endure for extended periods of time. Social Ministry was able to provide socially-distanced, in-person gatherings in our pavilion through mid-November, at which time the weather became too cold to continue. Drive-through meals and the distribution of Christmas stockings containing edible goodies,

hand sanitizer, lip balm, lotion, socks, gloves, and hats also provided an uplifting taste of community to those in need. And we delivered more casserole meals to congregation members this year than ever before, with visiting at a distance on front porches and in garages being a big part of the process. It is my perception that people were hungering just as much for the personal contact as for the food itself.

As we maneuver our way through this perilous pandemic we continue

to strive to provide much-needed financial and emotional support for the community. And our goal is always to do so in a manner that embodies an awareness from the heart. †



IMAGE CREDIT: Sally John.

EMMANUEL

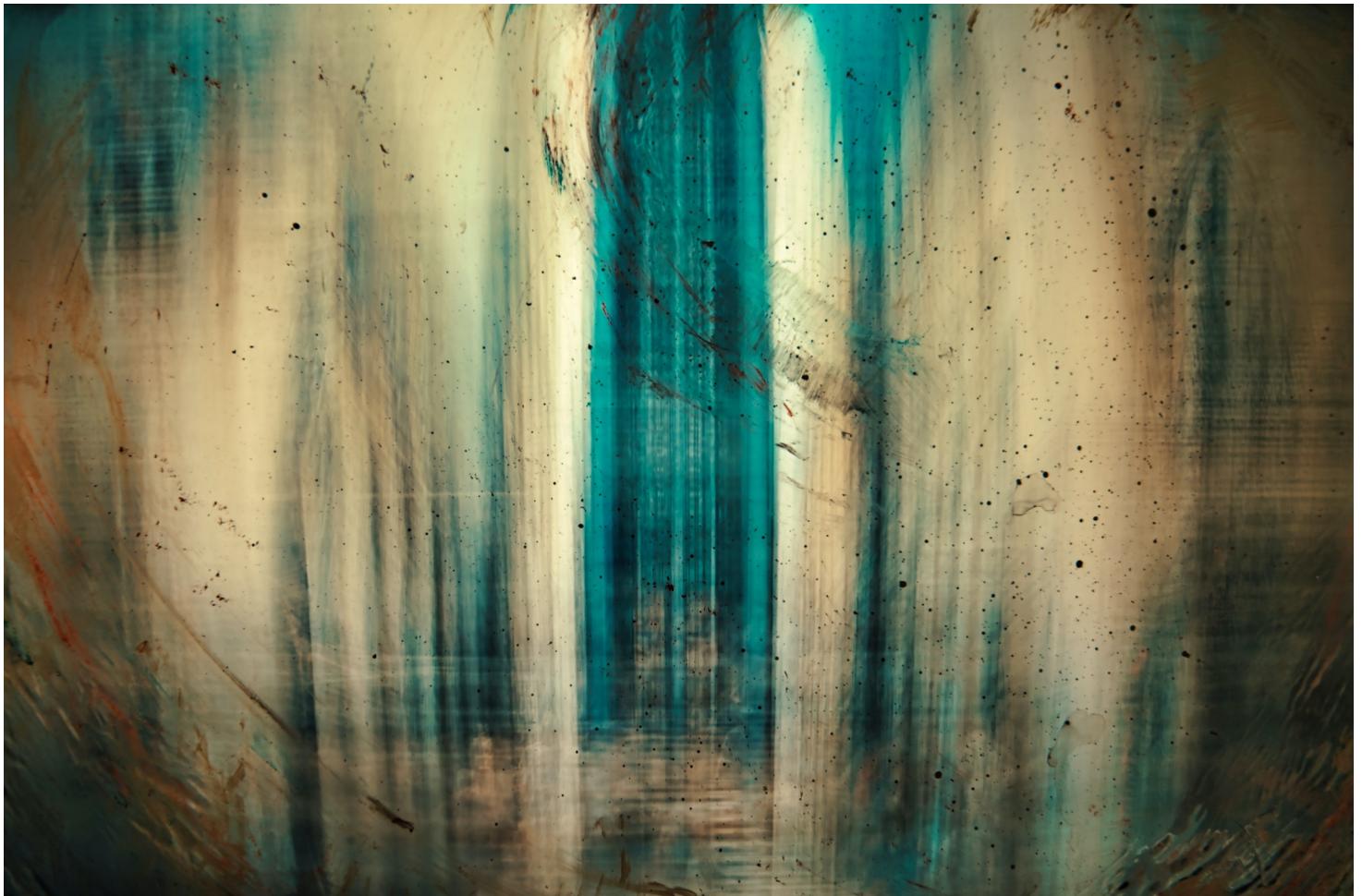
by Stacy Schroeder

When we consider mindful prayer
we might imagine a candle flickering in a chapel
a penitent kneeling at a pew
maybe even a hermit hidden in a cave.
We might believe this prayer must happen
in silence and solitude
in secrecy and stillness
broken only by breeze or
faint monastic music.
These visions might bring comfort
or seem unachievable.
They might even make us
squirm.

No matter the reaction,
without much thought,
we soon go on with our days.

We make our lists and rush about.
We react and
we scramble.
We fall into bed each night,
exhausted.
We feel something
missing
but do not have time to figure out what.
We tell ourselves we believe in God.
We worship on Sundays and
we do the good things but
sometimes
we feel
empty.
We wonder
Where is God?

PHOTO CREDITS: (both pages) Jr Korpa for UNSPLASH





And then
by accident
we stumble into a mindful moment.
Perhaps the sun on our face as we take out the trash
the warmth of clothes fresh from the dryer
the smell of bread baking
or the laugh of a baby.
We get so caught up in delight that we
pause.
And in that moment we feel
peace.
In that moment we feel
God
loving us and beckoning to us.

It is that easy
to spend time with God.
All it requires is that we
stop doing and just
be
that we breathe out
all our jumbled emotions and
b r e a t h e i n
our Creator's light.

Our world has advanced
so many electronic efficiencies ...
meditation apps
noise-canceling headphones
and all kinds of "wellness tools."
There is nothing wrong with these.
But do they sometimes become
crutches that keep us
from the simplicity of a
real conversation with God?
Our big beautiful world is
So full of joys and hands-on tasks
ready-made Spirit connections we often shirk
for dissonant distractions.

Emmanuel ... God with us
we pray
stay close when we stray
nudge us to settle and
ground ourselves in you
not because we should
but because we cannot imagine
anything
else. †

MINDFULNESS DURING LENT

by Laura Wills

Prayer and mindfulness. I suspect many people having been doing both the past eleven months as we've dealt with the stresses of a global pandemic, racial unrest, food scarcity, school and work closures, isolation, job losses, violent political insurrection, illness, and death – prayers to heal our world and mindfulness to pay attention to the good things in our lives so we're not overwhelmed by all the negative in the world.

This issue's theme of healing through prayer and mindfulness is quite timely. As we approach the Lenten season, this is the perfect time to really focus on mindfulness.

Lent is a time of reflection as we prepare for the celebration of Easter.

Lent reminds us of Christ's fasting in the wilderness.

Many people use Lent to change a habit or give up something but practicing mindfulness will remind us to slow down, be aware, reflect and appreciate all the gifts that we've been given. Rather than focusing only on the negative connotation of Lent (in terms of giving up something), it can also be a time to focus on growing closer to God. The Bible talks about this act of mindfulness – sitting and being in the moment with God – in Psalm 46:10: "Be still and know that I am God."

Attending worship is a weekly reminder to be mindful of our relationship with God. So does being engaged in a Sunday Church School class as we dig deeper into the lessons of the day. The Educational Ministries Committee works year-round to provide opportunities for you to involve yourself and be more mindful of your relationship with God.

During the pandemic, all of St Stephen's Sunday Church School classes (three adult and two youth ones) and the Pastor's weekly Bible Study have remained active online. This is a great opportunity to try out a class even if you aren't a regular attendee – in fact, adults should try out all three of our adult classes and see which one fits you the best!

Normally during the Lenten season, the Educational Ministries Committee provides a printed daily devotional book to enhance your Lenten journey. An online version of those books is not available so we have found two different opportunities for you this year.

1. Lutheran Hour Ministries provides Lenten devotions in three formats: online, via email and audio podcasts. You can sign up for your preferred method at <https://www.lhm.org/lent/>.

2. If you'd like something more substantive, Sola Publishing is providing a new Zoom Bible study for Lent.

Their six-week Bible study (Mondays at 7:00PM starting February 22) examines the most profound event of salvation history, the crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ, by exploring from a biblical perspective what is known as the doctrine of the Atonement. This study looks at the promise of the cross from several different angles, seeking to better understand what Christ has done for us in pursuit of

answering the central question "Why did Jesus have to die?" Email alittle@solapublishing.com to sign up for this Bible study (limited to 100 participants). Then go to SolaPublishing.com to order your copy of the student book *Why Did Jesus Have To Die?* (Item # A-6010/\$7.99). You will receive a zoom link from Sola Publishing before the study begins. If you are unable to cover the cost of a book, please contact Laura Wills (717-497-0746/laura.wills05@gmail.com) and the EM committee will cover the cost for you.

I hope that whatever activities you use to engage during Lent, that you do them with mindfulness. Say a prayer thanking God for what you have. Read the Bible and let it sink in rather than rushing through a chapter.

Mindfulness isn't about doing more. It's about focusing on and really experiencing what we already do.



PHOTO CREDIT: Katerina Jerabkova for UNSPLASH.

Longsdorf Cemetery

201 N. Locust Point Rd, Mechanicsburg, PA 17050



PHOTO CREDITS: Tom Burson

LOTS AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE

Contact custodian Guy Eckert at 717-795-9107

Interested in serving on the cemetery board? Contact St. Stephen Lutheran Church at 717-766-2168.
*St Stephen is affiliated with this historical local cemetery, est. in 1771.
(Longsdorf was the original name of our church prior to 1844.)*



PHOTO CREDITS: Rachel Strong for UNSPLASH.

Online Bible Study

Wednesdays @ 7:00PM
through February 10.

We will be studying and having conversation on the book of Ecclesiastes from the Old Testament.

This book is a book of wisdom that has application in our lives today.

All are welcome to explore this book together.

PRAYERS FOR HEALING

Selections from the Book of Evangelical Lutheran Worship



PHOTO CREDIT: Ante Gudolj for UNSPLASH

*Here are prayers culled from the ELCA's most recent worship book, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* (pages 72-87), words you might appreciate in current times. Whether you use these words or your own, we encourage you to set aside time to pray and to listen to what God might be saying to you in return.*

Prayers for peace

O God, it is your will to hold both heaven and earth in a single peace. Let the design of your great love shine on the waste of our wraths and sorrows, and give peace to your church, peace among nations, peace in our homes, and peace in our hearts; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Gracious and holy God, lead us from death to life, from falsehood to truth. Lead us from despair to hope, from fear to trust. Lead us from hate to love, from war to peace. Let peace fill our hearts, our world, our universe; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. *Amen.*



PHOTO CREDIT: Rajesh Rajput for UNSPLASH

Prayers in time of conflict, crisis, disaster

O God, where hearts are fearful and constricted, grant courage and hope. Where anxiety is infectious and widening, grant peace and reassurance. Where impossibilities close every door and window, grant imagination and resistance. Where distrust twists our thinking, grant healing and illumination. Where spirits are daunted and weakened, grant soaring wings and strengthened dreams. All these things we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. *Amen.*

God, our refuge and strength, you have bound us together in a common life. In all our conflicts, help us to confront one another without hatred or bitterness, to listen for your voice amid competing claims, and to work together with mutual forbearance and respect; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Prayers for health of body and soul

By your power, great God, our Lord Jesus healed the sick and gave new hope to the hopeless. Though we cannot command or possess your power, we pray for those who want to be healed. Mend their wounds, soothe fevered brows, and make broken people whole again. Help us to welcome every healing as a sign that, though death is against us, you are for us, and have promised renewed and risen life in Jesus Christ the Lord. *Amen.*

Prayers for recovery from sickness

Almighty and merciful God, you are the only source of health and healing; you alone can bring calmness and peace. Grant to us, your children, an awareness of your presence and a strong confidence in you. In our pain, our weariness, and our anxiety, surround us with your care, protect us by your loving might, and permit us once more to enjoy health and strength and peace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. *Amen.*



PHOTO CREDIT: Sally John.



Special Services for LENT, HOLY WEEK, & EASTER

At press-time, it was not possible to know how pandemic restrictions might affect the type and timing of some of these services. Visit StStephenLC.org for the most current details on how to participate.

Drive-through Imposition of Ashes – 2/17 at 5:30-6:30pm. St. Stephen Lutheran Church.

You can drive up to the church to receive a prayer and blessing as well as the imposition of Ashes.

Ash Wednesday Service – 2/17 at 7pm. Online.

In place of the imposition of Ashes, we will be anointing with oil and invite online worshippers to bless themselves and/or others in their home with oil as we begin the journey of Lent.

Mid-Week Lenten Worship Services – 2/24, 3/3, 3/10, 3/17 at 7pm.

Healing Service – 3/24 at 7pm.

This will be an opportunity for worshippers to hear words of healing and release from bondage. We will be hearing Scripture of lament, holding discussion about healing and lament, and offering prayers. This is an excellent opportunity to ready your hearts and minds for Holy Week.

Palm Sunday – 3/28. Time TBD.

We will celebrate the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem as we cheer Hosanna and move into Holy Week.

Maundy Thursday – 4/1 at 7pm.

We will recall the Last Supper as we share a meal together.

Good Friday – 4/2 at noon.

We will offer a prayer service to recall the crucifixion of Jesus. 7pm we will hold a worship service.

Easter Vigil – 4/3 at 7pm.

Easter Sunday 4/4 at time TBD.

MONDAYS @ 10:00AM

**Stroll
Through
Scripture**

**Preview next Sunday's
scripture readings with
Pastor Matthew Best**

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CLOSING PRAYER



PHOTO CREDIT: Greg John

Please pray with me.

Healing God, how we need you. Psalm 107:19-20 states, “Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress. He sent out his word and healed them.” We like to think we are self-sufficient. But you don’t call on us to be self-sufficient. You call on us to be part of a community. You call on us to be in relationship with you and others. Because no one is truly self-sufficient. We need each other. We need you. Heal us in the many ways that only you can. Heal us from our pains and sufferings. Heal us from our divisions and divides. Heal us.

AMEN.



PHOTO CREDIT: Karen Hennicks

A FEW WAYS TO RECEIVE & RESPOND

1

You can hold our ministries and those who work in these ministries in prayer. In need of prayer yourself? We pray at every gathering and also have an electronic prayer list that goes out regularly with specific requests. If you would like people to pray for you, please call the church office or send a message to prayer@StStephenLC.org.

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2

You are invited to worship and engage in the life of ministry. Our worship services and other gatherings are listed on the back page of this newsletter. There are many opportunities to learn and participate as well as to volunteer your time and skills. For more info, contact Pastor Matthew at 717-766-2168 or pastor@StStephenLC.org.

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3

You may also contribute financially in any of the following ways (all tax-deductible):

- Cash or check
- Go to StStephenLC.org and use the Donate button at the bottom of the page
- Text the dollar amount to 717-685-6947
- Go to the URL <https://engage.suran.com/sslc/s/login>

ST STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH
 30 West Main St, New Kingstown, PA 17072
 717-766-2168
office@StStephenLC.org
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New Kingstown, PA 17072



PHOTO CREDIT: Aaron Burden for UNSPLASH

YOU ARE INVITED TO WORSHIP

Information at StStephenLC.org

We are excited to announce that new audio-visual equipment has been installed to our sanctuary which will enhance all worship services. Please visit StStephenLC.org or call 717-766-2168 for the latest gathering options for worship in terms of pandemic restrictions.

WE ARE HERE TO HELP

If you are hungry or in need, please contact our church office at 717-766-2168. We have meals, gift cards, personal hygiene kits, and more to share.

For more information, contact:

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