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Service for the Lords Day - May 24, 2020

Rev. Mark Tammen

GP & Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Long Island

Prelude

J.S.Bach-Choral Prelude

Words of Welcome

Laurie Vu

Leader: This is the day that the Lord has made.

All: Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Call to Worship

Psalm 68:32-35 (NIV)

Laurie Vu

Leader: Sing to God, you kingdoms of the earth, sing praise to the Lord,

People: to him who rides across the highest heavens, the ancient heavens, who thunders with mighty voice.

Leader: Proclaim the power of God, whose majesty is over Israel, whose power is in the heavens.

People: You, God, are awesome in your sanctuary; the God of Israel gives power and strength to his people.

All: Praise be to God!

Hymn

Come Now is the Time to Worship

Brian Doerksen ©1998 Mercy/Vineyard Songs

1 Peter 5:6-11

(NIV)

6 Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. 7 Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. 8 Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. 9 Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings. 10 And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. 11 To him be the power forever and ever. Amen.

Memorial Prayer

Charlaine Apsel

Eternal God,
from whom all life comes, to whom all life returns, we remember all who served our country in the military. We remember all those whose lives we have lost to this pandemic. We remember, and we give thanks. We give thanks for sacrifices made and losses endured. We give thanks for acts of courage, grace, and hope. We give thanks for our brothers and sisters who gave the full measure of devotion. We pray for our brothers and sisters who are recovering from wounds in body, mind, spirit, or soul. We pray for families and friends and all who grieve for loved ones who have died. Meet them in the valley of death's shadow. Embrace them in the healing warmth of your comfort, grace, and love. Grant them and all of us the assurance that nothing in life or in death can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord, Amen.

Scripture Reading

1 Peter 5:6-11 (NIV)

Gloria Burgess

Message

Rev. Mark Tammen

Hymn

Christ Our Hope in Life and Death

Keith & Kristyn Getty ©2020 Getty Music Publishing

Offering

Patrick Knight

The ministry of the church will continue, and it continues to rely on your gifts and support. We are stronger when people share their time, talents, and financial gifts with the church. Please continue to give to your home congregation as you are able.

Thank you for all the blessings you share to support our ministry.

**THE LORD
IS NEAR TO THE
BROKEN
HEARTED AND
SAVES THE
CRUSHED IN
SPIRIT.**

Psalm 34:18



Lord God, we remember those who have given their lives as they served our nation. We thank you for their bravery and sacrifice and pray that as a nation, we would honor them by seeking truth, mercy, freedom, and justice. We pray also for veterans now tempted to end their own lives as they cope with the troubles within. Protect them, O God, and enable your people to extend your loving arms of care and strength, that peace may come. Encourage and sustain our chaplains as they herald your grace and embody your love. Amen.

Prayer of Dedication

Patrick Knight

Blessed are you, God of all creation; through your goodness, we have these gifts to share. Accept and use our offerings for your glory and for the service of your kingdom. Blessed be God forever.

Hymn

Breathe on Me Breath of God

Words: Edwin Hatch (1835-1889)

Music: Trentham, Robert Jackson (1840-1914)

Prayer of Confession

Psalm 103.8, 10-12

Patrick Knight

The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness. He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His lovingkindness toward those who fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.

The Lord's Table

Rev. Mark Tammen

Hymn

Great is Thy Faithfulness

Stockton Tab

Benediction

Rev. Mark Tammen

This weekend, we have been seeing a string of heartwarming military and medical hero stories. And even in this odd environment that we are all experiencing, that is surely fitting. Yet, one of those stories stuck with me; perhaps you saw it. It was a poignant story about a platoon leader who singlehandedly saved two fellow platoon members, while under brutal enemy fire. Yet, not surprisingly, this 23-year-old Purpleheart honoree faced some anxiety from his harrowing experience – the military even has a name for PTSD. But that was not the part of the story that struck me though I want not to take any honor from him for his service; it was his takeaway that really blew me away.

For he told the reporter that "hope was replacing anxiety in his life" We New Yorkers have seen countless stories these past ten weeks, of selfless and compassionate acts by medical professionals, helping a distraught adult child via iPhone say a final goodbye to a parent dying in isolation--out of anxiety hope came through!

This is a bizarre Memorial Day weekend. We have a Governor, and couple county executives, urging us not to hold our normal Memorial Day activities. No airshows, no parades, no picnics in the local park, even admonishments to do social distancing and donning masks, if we dare go to the beach?

But those of us gathered in this amazing, yet not entirely satisfactory, alternative to our normal Memorial Day Sunday experience--we have our Scripture passage from Peter's pen. This is a post-resurrection letter. The disciples were carrying on with the Gospel message after Jesus had both Risen from the dead and now returned to Heaven

And like our opening story, the prevailing human emotion was anxiety for not all hearers were exactly receptive life, and death was a constant reality for Peter and his original hearers. That is something every one of us hearing this message can understand; real-time-COVID 19 can indeed hasten death.

For this Memorial Day weekend, we are anxious, for Long Island has not yet come even close to meeting all the required metrics, and we, all of us hearing these words, we are stuck in our homes, with only housemates for company. When we venture forth out of our cocoons, we have don masks and even gloves--just to pick up a gallon of milk.

But into this context, coming from almost 2000 years ago now, "Cast all your anxiety" upon our Savior.... Now THAT is hope blasting through our anxiety! Our Lord promises to restore and make us strong! (And not just New York Strong) God Strong!

You are restricted to your house, doing all social contact virtually (zoom or phone); we have all already lost folks near and dear to us to this indiscriminate disease, but our Lord promises to make us strong that's Peter's message. That's my message to all of us this morning.

We don't face this challenge today at all alone for our Lord is here; Our Lord hears our calls, sees our anxiety. But our Lord can help us with "new" normality and our Lord is with us, right here, right now, and Our Lord makes us strong enough to face this momentary challenge on Memorial Day 2020