

Readings for April 28, 2019

Second Sunday of Easter

"The Great Mystery of Faith...The Holy Spirit"

9:30 AM

Acts 5:27-32

Psalm 150

Revelation 1:4-8

John 20:19-31

10:45 AM

Psalm 150

John 20:19-31



Readings for May 5, 2019

Third Sunday of Easter

"The Great Mystery of Faith...Transformation"

9:30 AM

Acts 9:1-20

Psalm 30

Revelation 5:11-14

John 21:1-19

10:45 AM

Acts 9:1-20

John 21:1-19

Daily Walk for the week of April 29, 2019

"The Great Mystery of Faith: The Holy Spirit"

Written by Mary Anderson

Monday, April 29th Jesus is Lord and Ruler of All

"John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood, and made us to be a kingdom, priests serving his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen." Revelation 1:4-6. Legend has it that this writer, John, was Jesus' disciple but it is more likely, since John was a common name, that he was a leader of several Christian communities in what is now western Turkey. John had worked with these seven churches and was sending them a letter to encourage them in their struggles to live in a Roman-dominated world that expected all to worship the emperor as a god. Christians of today have just been through Holy Week, remembering the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord. We, however, need encouragement as the Christians of old did to focus our lives on Jesus who washed away all our sins. There are many temptations too in our lives even though, thankfully, we aren't commanded to worship our leaders as gods. We are asked to put Jesus first in our lives ahead of any other "god" such as power, money, fame and all temptations that take us away from Jesus, God's son. Let us tell others about his great love for us in our words and actions. **Prayer:** Lord God, in the resurrection of Christ, you announce your defeat over sin and our enemies. Whether we are in places of influence or humble voca-

tions, strengthen us so our lives may always focus on you and the gift of your Son. Amen

Tuesday, April 30th

Jesus Is the Beginning and the End

"Look! He is coming with the clouds; every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and on his account all the tribes of the earth will wail. So it is to be. Amen. 'I am the Alpha and the Omega', says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty." Revelation 1:7-8. John introduces the two themes of his letter. Jesus' reign over creation forever is both a warning to the unfaithful and a word of comfort to the faithful. As we all may know, Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. The focus of the Christian community begins and ends with God, revealed in Christ Jesus. It has been revealed to us in these words that Christ will come again to take us to live with him forever. We need only believe. Jesus is there for us always to reach out to; he is unchanging and there when we feel unsteady because of all the transitions in our lives. When my husband and I moved to Grayson after I retired and after living in the same community for 28 years, I needed my faith in God to keep me grounded. I looked first for a church community close to me where I could strengthen my faith and worship God with other believers and Community of Grace Lutheran Church was that place. God was with me as I knew he would be, with his Son, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit to guide me. **Prayer:** Dear Lord, you know our every need and are our rock and unchanging one in a world of instability. Fill us with your Holy Spirit and guide us to always trust in you. Amen

“The Great Mystery of Faith: Transformation”

Written by Pastor Matthew Henning

Wednesday May 1st Transformational Works

“Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father.” John 14: 11-12. As followers of Jesus in the Lutheran tradition we believe that we are saved by grace and not by works of the law. However, throughout John’s gospel Jesus understands that following him involves works in the world around them. For Jesus the works always begin with God and result in the unfolding of God’s kingdom in the world. So being a disciple means that we will work, but we just will not work for salvation. We work as a result of being saved already in the love and grace of Jesus that changes everything. From how we understand ourselves, the world around us, and what we do with the daily lives that we are given. Prayer: “Guide me into the work of your kingdom, O God, that I may live out the salvation you freely give to humanity. Amen.”

Thursday May 2nd

Mourning into Dancing

“You have turned my mourning into dancing; you have taken off my sackcloth and clothed me with joy, so that my soul may praise you and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give thanks to you forever.” Psalm 30: 11-12. There are times when we grieve it is hard to imagine that we will ever experience joy again. In this Psalm there is an exchange of attitude and clothing through the mysterious power of God’s transforming grace. It is teaching us that change enters our hearts through the power of the Holy Spirit and it offers a transformation that we may not even see as possible at different times in our lives. Trusting in the mystery of grace even when we are suffering can guide us into deeper healing. Prayer: “Healing Spirit, guide me into peace when I experience mourning. Amen.”

Friday May 3rd

Seeing the Mystery

“I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty; and the hem of his robe filled the temple. Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. And one called to another and said: ‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.’” Isaiah 6: 1b-3. Isaiah is re-

counting the moment of his call from God to be a prophet and the clear vision he had of the very mysterious presence of God. This is where Isaiah reminds his people that he, like them, in many ways was “unclean” in his relationship with God; yet, in grace, God calls him to his work as a prophet. He was an imperfect prophet called to proclaim to an imperfect people. The lesson is that holiness of God can be found even in the midst of a profane world. Isaiah was called to be faithful, not perfect, as he served. Prayer: “Open my eyes and heart to your calling this day, O God. Amen.”

Saturday May 4th

Welcome the Stranger

Abraham was sitting by his tent in the shade to protect him from the heat of the day when this happened: “He looked up and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent entrance to meet them, and bowed down to the ground. He said, ‘My lord, if I find favor with you, do not pass by your servant. Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. Let me bring a little bread, that you may refresh yourselves...’” Genesis 18: 2-5a. Abraham was hosting the manifestation of God in these three strange men. He was also modeling for all of us the power of God that is at work when we welcome and act hospitable to people we do not know. Simple kind actions open doors to people’s hearts and they create space for understanding to grow. The next time a moment presents itself follow Abraham’s example. Prayer: “Open my life to the possibility that can come, through the people around me. Amen.”

Sunday May 5th

The Great Mystery of Faith—Transformation

“He said to him a third time, ‘Simon son of John, do you love me?’ Peter felt hurt because he said to him a third time, ‘Do you love me?’ And he said to him, ‘Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Feed my sheep.’” John 21: 17. Earlier in John’s story Peter denies Jesus three times and here at the end Jesus gives Peter three opportunities to proclaim his love. Jesus is marking a new life as head of the church with this proclamation. Peter was transformed by this encounter in a way that enabled him to serve in his new role as shepherd for the church on Earth. Jesus gave Peter the strength to do the work of the church through faith. We are all given that same gift in many different ways but with the same Holy Spirit at the center. Prayer: “Loving God, open my heart with faith, that I may live a transformed life through Your Holy Spirit. Amen.”