



Easter Sermon Series Breaking Bread with Jesus

Listed below are the scripture texts that will inform my preaching during this Covid-19 Easter Season. All are invited to think about what life would have been like for the followers of Jesus who were living in uncertain times, just as we are today.

May 3	Luke 24:36-49	In the Upper Room
May 10	John 21:1-14	Breakfast on the Beach
May 17	John 21:15-25	Feed My Sheep
May 24	Matthew 28:16-20	The Great Commission
May 31	Acts 2:1-13	Pentecost

Here's what's on the Inside!

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"When you are a mother, you are never really alone in your thoughts. A mother always has to think twice, once for herself and once for her child." - Sophia Loren

"When your mother asks, 'Do you want a piece of advice?' It is a mere formality. It doesn't matter if you answer yes or no. You're going to get it anyway." - Erma Bombeck

Thoughts from Pastor Maureen

Psalm 126:5-6

May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy.
Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing,
shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves.

Bad Medicine Lake is a special place. My husband's grandfather had a cabin there beginning in the early 1960's and Mark's parents built a lake home there in 1977. As a result we have many good memories of time "at the lake." I would venture to say that it is my "happy place."



This picture, taken on April 19th, shows that the lake is still ice covered and that it is still thick enough for someone to walk on (don't ask how I know!) Ice is an important part of the life cycle of a lake in the north lands. There is actually a lot of natural and healthy action happening under the ice but the casual visitor can't see it. April at the lake does not present the lake at its' finest. Even now we wait for summer to come and long for the time when the lake will look like the second picture.

The ice on the lake is a good metaphor for our lives right now. God is at work in our world "under the ice" as many scientists are working hard to come up with antibody tests and treatment plans and vaccines so that the people of the world can come out of their homes again. We can't necessarily see this work and we can't necessarily recognize God's inspiration behind this work. But it's there.

Psalm 126: 5-6 resonates in a time like this. The phrase "May those who sow in tears" speaks to the spring of sorrow that we are experiencing. But it ends with a word of hope as we look to the fall and the time when we will carry our sheaves in at the harvest. We look forward to the time when "our fortunes will be restored." We look forward to the time when the ice will be off the lake. We look forward to the time when we can gather as friends and family. We look forward to worship together. We know these times are coming and we trust that in our waiting eventually we "shall come home with shouts of joy."



Blessings,

~Pastor Maureen

A Message from The Church Council:

This message comes to you hoping that you and yours are observing 'social distancing' and proper hygiene dealing with this virus pandemic sweeping the nation. I'm sure everyone is anxious to get back to normal, attend church services, and see our Christian friends. Pastor Maureen has been conducting services via YouTube which has been a real blessing but not the same as attending Sunday services. Since the onset of this virus, the council has decided not to meet in close quarters to discuss issues concerning the operation of our church. Rest assured that we have been in communication with each other in the interim to conduct important church matters. We have not gathered to meet face to face since our Annual Congregational meeting on February 23, 2020. Until this virus subsides and we feel that we can once again come together to discuss church matters, this policy will continue.

Be safe, observe the recommendations, and stay healthy,
Greg Drewianka, Church Council President



Congratulations to our Graduating Seniors—the Class of 2020!

Dylan Anderson, son of Jillian & Shane Anderson

Max Evanson, son of Dan & Shelley Evanson

Kailynn Lind, daughter of Des Meyer

**Anthony Mann, son of Chris Mann, grandson of
Dave Carlson and Mary Mann**

Hailey Mann, daughter of Jessie Bignell

****Per VASA tradition, your blue jean quilts will be
delivered to you on May 17. Congratulations again!**



When I asked my youngest nephew, Joshua, if he would be in church that coming Sunday, he replied: "Oh, yes. Because my brother is going to be the pilot light."

~Laughing with Lutherans



- 2 - Gabriel Bauch
Sarah Jo Hedeon
- 5 - Owyne Gillis
Vivian Strusz
- 6 - Josh Hanson
- 7 - Bentley Endres
Chris Mann
- 10 - Ron Scripture
- 11 - Jim Hedeon
- 12 - Merle Pearson
- 14 - Martha Hanson
- 16 - Ross Fredin
Bruce Tilderquist
- 18 - Nora Featherstone
Ezekiel Pearson
- 19 - Brady Bosshart
Jeff Nelsen
- 20 - Katie Lindahl
- 26 - Gabriel Rehder
- 27 - Theresa Fredin
Julia Stahnke
- 28 - Parker Nelson
- 29 - Anthony Mann
Brian Schmidt
- 30 - Lisa Bosshart
Kathy Tilderquist
- 31 - Gerald McRae
Audrey Rosener

May Community Dinner

It is with great regret and sadness that we feel it necessary to once again cancel the community dinner this month. It is not a decision that we make lightly, but the health and safety of everyone who participates – whether helping with food prep, making deliveries, or enjoying the fellowship—is our main concern. We look forward to resuming this amazing ministry in September, if possible. Thanks to everyone who made this year such a success.

Free Community Dinner



How Vasa Is Staying Connected...

- **Gail Strusz-Klein** is tentatively planning a children's carnival for August 22, depending on Gathering Guidelines surrounding COVID19. Proceeds will go toward new children's playground equipment. Stay tuned for more details.
- **Thanks to the generosity of two Thrivent Action Teams**, Easter bags were delivered to 75 children, ages 2-18, before Easter. Bags contained candy, cheese cured, an orange, a Thrivent T-shirt, a message from Pastor, and an Easter activity. Bags were assembled by Faye Drewianka, Dan and Shirley Hedeem and Kathy Tilderquist and were delivered to homes by the Drewiankas, Dan and Shirley, Jim and Sue Hedeem, Randy and Geri Lindholm and Pastor Maureen and Mark. Similar bags were also delivered to the shut-ins of the church.
- **MOTHERS OF Pre-K-High School students will be receiving flowers on Mother's Day, thanks to the same Action Teams!**
- **Rosann Pearson wrote to say...** "I like to start the day with prayers, (devotions, Bible reading). And I also need a routine! Breakfast, household chores, make 5 or 6 calls to friends, neighbors or family, to check on them. I eat healthy meals, take a nap, listen to music, watch some TV. What a day! I end with thanksgiving to God for all



"Motherhood: All love begins and ends there." – Robert Browning

"All that I am or ever hope to be, I owe to my angel mother." – Abraham Lincoln

"A mother understands what a child does not say." – Jewish Proverb

"I realized when you look at your mother, you are looking at the purest love you will ever know." – Mitch Albom

"Mother love is the fuel that enables a normal human being to do the impossible." – Marion C. Garretty

Mark's Meditation

By Mark Hagen

Have you seen the YouTube videos we have been creating for worship services at Vasa Lutheran Church? Maureen settled on this route after she talked to several pastors from area churches. We have been recording the service on Friday or Saturday; then uploading the video to YouTube so that it is available for viewing on Sunday.

The church has a video camera, but it records on either tape or a memory card format that has apparently fallen out of favor. (I can't find a computer that will accept the memory card.) Instead we have been using my DSLM (digital single lens mirrorless) camera. One drawback of using a still camera to take videos is that it will only record 14 minutes of video at a time. However, this has turned out to be a blessing. It forces us to stop and reposition the lights and camera for the different segments of the service. Once the segments of the service are recorded we can stitch them together on a computer before uploading to YouTube.

Hopefully the recorded services have been getting better each week. I've learned a lot. So far, we have only been using one lavalier microphone for sound. That should change this week. I've ordered a small portable microphone mixer so that we can have several microphones connected to the camera. I purchased a different tripod for the camera. This one has more adjustment for making the image level. I also bought brighter lights--though, if we keep doing this, I'll probably buy even brighter lights.

We will continue to add more to the recordings as we get more practiced at this. I hope that watching the service, listening to Austin's music, and hearing Maureen bring the message of the Gospel brings you some comfort. But it is nothing like being there. I miss seeing everyone on Sunday morning and look forward to when we can meet together again.



"A mother is a person who seeing there are only four pieces of pie for five people, promptly announces she never did care for pie." - Tenneva Jordan

"Mothers hold their children's hands for a short while, but their hearts forever." - Unknown

"A mother's love endures through all." - Washington Irving

VASA EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Treasurer's Report March 2020

For the Month of March:

Checkbook Balance, March 1, 2020	\$ 31,631.16
General Fund Contributions:	11,571.77
Total Funds Available	43,202.93
Budget Approved Monthly Expenses:	<u>18,025.65</u>
Checkbook Balance, March 30, 2020	\$ 25,177.28

Mission Investment Fund, Feb 29, 2020	\$33,933.66
Mission Investment Fund, Mar 30, 2020	\$33,970.90



From the Bishop's Desk

Reflections on Wilderness Journeys

One of my strongest memories of my time as pastor at St. Luke is standing in the pulpit and preaching on Genesis 12. That passage, along with portions of Exodus, are the Biblical texts that most shaped my time as pastor there. Particularly, the first time I preached Genesis 12 and told the congregation I believed the Spirit was calling us to something new we just didn't know what it looked like quite yet.

I preached that passage and that message over and over again in my time there. All the while never having a full appreciation for the ways the Spirit was using those words to shape us as a people.

It was years of preaching a sense that the Spirit was calling us forward into unknown lands before the lived experience of the congregation was one of moving into a new season of life together. Before we did the practical work of walking into a new land there were years of Spirit led conversations and worship services and discernment. None of this happened exclusively through the pulpit, but through congregational leaders, and children and youth ministries, and spending time in the community. We didn't really know what we were doing and there wasn't really a long-term plan (which, admittedly, made some people nervous). We just kept trying to live into our baptismal identity as the People of God in our community and we held fast to the notion that the Spirit was up to something even if we couldn't articulate what that was *exactly*.

I have been reflecting on that season of ministry as we live together into another unknown reality. I've been wondering about how the Spirit might be using our words and conversations and worship services to shape us into the people we will need to be in the new land we are moving toward. I've returned to the prayer of Moses in Exodus 33, "do not let us go where your glory is not." And I've been considering how, in so many ways, this feels like a wilderness journey. It feels as though we are living in the space between Egypt and the Promised Land. The space in which we are formed and shaped and we can't quite see the end.

It can be a disconcerting space to live in, so I am reassured by the fact that it's a space the People of God seem to inhabit fairly regularly in Scripture.

I've also been wondering about what kind of posturing might leave us most open to the shaping work of the Spirit in this time.

I have been reflecting a lot on fasting. The reality is there is much we are fasting from in this time: some of it by our choosing and some of it not. This period of fasting has led to questions of self-reflection. What am I fasting from and why? What do I miss about that which I fast from? What can my desire to end this fast teach me? Is this longing a veil for another aching I haven't yet acknowledged? In what ways am I tempted to feed myself with something else instead of allowing myself to feel the hunger of a fast?

I've also been thinking about the human desire to avoid suffering at all costs and the truth that God works in the midst of suffering. What kinds of lessons might we be open to if we are willing to sit in the difficult, uncomfortable, painful spaces for a while? What can others, including our global partners, teach us about faithful living in the midst of widespread suffering?

From the Bishop's Desk

Reflections on Wilderness Journeys (cont.)

And all of these questions have led me to another: what kinds of learning and formation might this unique time in the life of the church open us up to?

These, of course, are not questions to be answered as much as they are questions to be pondered. And I wonder if that might be one of the important disciplines we are invited to in this wilderness space. I wonder if there is an opportunity for us as pastors, deacons, and leaders...as *people* to linger in this wilderness space and ask questions, open ourselves to possibilities, and allow the Spirit to mold and shape us for the land that is to come.

I realize that your response to this might be: *she clearly doesn't realize how much we have to do.*

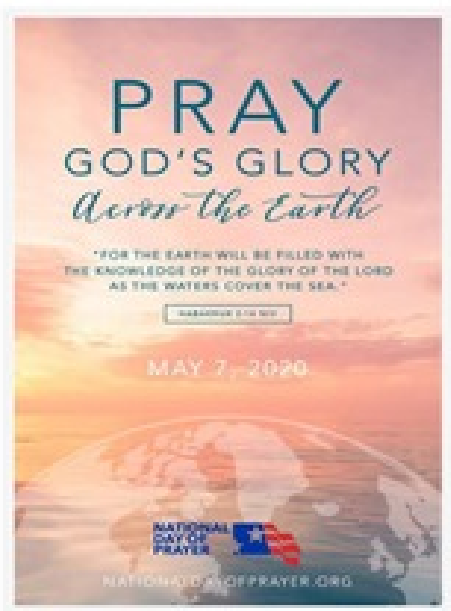
And yet, I am not writing to ask you to *do* anything. I am asking you to pay attention to this time. I am encouraging you to be aware of the discoveries you are making, the questions you are asking, the voices you are hearing. I am encouraging you to allow yourself to live in this wilderness space for just a while without resisting. And I am reminding you that you are not alone: the Spirit is at work among us and we are part of the communion of saints. It is the same God who spoke to Abram, who freed the Israelites, who claimed Jesus and who called you by name, that leads us now.

May the Spirit who was at work in creation and is at work in us today shape us and form us for the new lands to come.

In Christ,
Bishop Regina Hassanally



Southeastern Minnesota Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Equipping congregations and leaders to follow Jesus into a changing world.
Developing leaders • Equipping congregations • Accompanying global partners



Pray God's Glory Across the Earth **Habakkuk 2:14 (niv)**

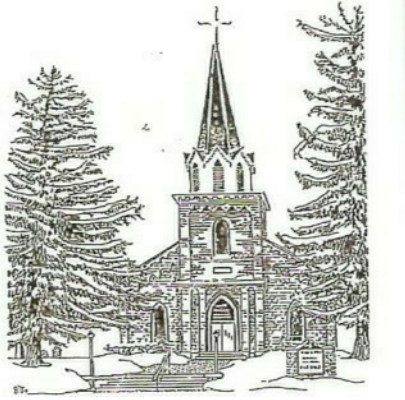
What: 21st Annual Cannon Valley Prayer Event in observance of the National Day of Prayer

When: Thursday, May 7, 2020
7:00 PM

Where: Online. Details to come
(*watch your email*)

Who: All are welcome to join us in prayer for our nation and our community!

VASA LUTHERAN CHURCH
15235 NORELIUS ROAD (In Vasa)
WELCH, MN 55089



Historic Vasa Lutheran Church Built in 1869

Vasa Drawing by B-J Norman

Worship Schedule during Covid19

9:00 am Sundays

Via YouTube – find the link at vasalutheran.org

-Wednesday Window Meditations (uploaded weekly)

Found on the Vasa Lutheran Facebook Page

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Emily Peterson, Office Administrator

Melissa McCann, Custodian

Austin Ferguson, Worship Accompanist

Gail Strusz-Klein, Wedding Coordinator

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Greg Drewianka 651-301-2472

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Rick Samuelson 651-380-9150

Missionaries

Paul & Jay Mikaelson, Missionaries in LaPaz, Bolivia

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Vasa Mission Statement

We the Vasa congregation,
called by God, commit to:

Worshipping together,
Growing in faith,
Serving others, and
Welcoming and loving all!

Scatter seeds
of kindness
wherever you go