

The Great Fifty Days

Scripture and Prayers for the Season of Eastertide



for the week of May 24, 2020

HAMILTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
5532 HARFORD ROAD
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

THE LAST WEEK OF THE GREAT FIFTY DAYS

This last week leads us into the Day of Pentecost. I think of Pentecost as the “Birthday of the Christian.” Acts 2:1-13 tells of the time when a bunch of waiting disciples – scared, frazzled, unfocused and waiting – receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. They received a focus, direction and a power beyond themselves.

Pentecost, with Christmas and Easter, is one of the three great festivals of the Church. The world has done quite a job of commercializing Christmas and Easter. But Pentecost has confounded them: there’s no possibility of commercialism here.

But we can say this without any question: we are at the corner of Hanford and Evergreen because of this day.

There is a bushel of confidence within this gift of the Spirit: focus, direction and power. Not too long ago, someone said to me there will be a huge divide between BC and AC – Before Coronavirus and After Coronavirus.

That seems true to me. I am not sure what the Church will look like in the AC time to come. I am quite sure that Church will continue to be vital and hope giving.

In that little booklet of “Prayers for Time of Uncertainty” that has been produced by Washington National Cathedral, these words:

This is another day, O Lord.
I know not what it will bring forth,
but make me ready, Lord,
for whatever it may be.
If I am to stand up, help me to stand bravely.
If I am to sit still, help me to sit quietly.
If I am to lie low, help me to do it patiently.
And if am to do nothing, let me do it gallantly.
Make these words more than words,
and give me the Spirit of Jesus. Amen.

A WEEK OF SCRIPTURE READING

Sunday - 7th Sunday in Eastertide

May 24th

Psalm for the Day: Psalm 93
An Epistle Reading: Ephesians 2:1-10

Monday - May 25

Psalm for the Day: Psalm 124
A Gospel Reading: Luke 9:51-62

Tuesday - May 26

Psalm for the Day: Psalm 66
A Gospel Reading: Luke 10:1-17

Wednesday - May 27

Psalm for the Day: Psalm 147:1-11
A Gospel Reading: Luke 10:17-24

Thursday - May 28

Psalm for the Day: Psalm 147:12-20
A Gospel Reading: Luke 10:25-27

Friday - May 29

Psalm for the Day: Psalm 148
A Gospel Reading: Luke 10:38-42

Saturday - May 30

Psalm for the Day: Psalm 149
A Gospel Reading: Luke 11:14-23

Sunday - Pentecost Sunday

May 31st

Psalm for the Day: Psalm 104:24-35
An Epistle Reading: Acts 2:1-12
John 20:19-23



(If the mail is slow, we provide a start on the new week with the Pentecost Sunday reading.)

STRONGER Stronger Together

WE WILL PERSEVERE.

“We have entered the endurance phase of this pandemic. We are slowly mastering this disease, but we have not yet done so. And so we wait — and endure.

“Endurance is patience. It is shortening your time horizon so you just have to get through this day. Endurance is living with unpleasantness. In fact, it is finding you can adapt and turn the strangest circumstance into routine.

“Endurance is fortifying. It is discovering you can get socked in the nose and take it.”

David Brooks
NY Times, 5/15/2020

When I read these comments from David Brooks, I found myself thinking of the J. B. Phillips’ translation of Paul’s good word in II Corinthians 4:7-9:

“This priceless treasure we hold, so to speak, in a common earthenware jar—to show that the splendid power of it belongs to God and not to us.

“We are handicapped on all sides, but we are never frustrated; we are puzzled, but never in despair. We are persecuted, but we never have to stand it alone: we may be knocked down but we are never knocked out!”