

All Saints Sunday
November 1, 2020

(If you are home read the prayers and scripture readings and recite the Creed aloud, even if you are by yourself, in order to hear with the ears each one. Sing or read the final hymn aloud. If you are worshiping in person, please follow along silently.)

Prepare for worship: Sit in silence or with soft music for a few moments

Call to Worship:

Love the Lord Your God
Love the Lord, your God,
with all your heart.
Love the Lord, your God,
with all your soul.
Love the Lord your God,
with all your mind.
Love the Lord, your God,
with all that you are.

From *The Faith We Sing* Copyright 2000, Abingdon Press, 2168

Centering Words:

Grace to you and peace from God who is, and was, and is to come. And from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and ruler of kings on earth. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all the saints.

From *The United Methodist Book of Worship*. Copyright 1992 The United Methodist Publishing House.

Prayer of the Day:

We bless your holy name, O God, for all your servants who, having finished their course, now rest from their labors. Give us grace to follow the example of their steadfastness and faithfulness, to your honor and glory; through Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen

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Remembering Our Saints:

Today is All Saints Sunday. It is a Sunday that we set aside to honor the lives of those in our congregation who have passed away during the past year. It is also a time that each of us may remember and honor those who have impacted our lives who have entered the church triumphant. As we call the names of those who have passed away, we light a candle to remind us of the light that shone through their lives. We honor the memory of:

Marvin Efron	Lisa Powell	Carolyn Sox
Dorothy Jean Johnson	Miriam Simpson	Margie Gay
Marian Risinger	Tommy Johnson	Mary Alice Duncan

Let us pray:

O Holy God, we give you thanks for the lives of these who have been beloved members of our Trinity community. We give you thanks for the lives of each of our saints as we name them in our hearts, (At this time a candle will be lit for those we name in our hearts, if at home you may light a candle in memory of your loved one(s)). As resurrection people we know that they have been gathered into your bosom. They stand around your throne singing your praise. We know that we will join them around your throne in your glory. This we know in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior, who taught us to pray:

The Lord's Prayer:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Prayer of Illumination:

Open our ears that we may hear and our hearts and minds that we may receive your word O Lord our rock and redeemer. Amen

- First Reading** 1 John 3: 1-3
Second Reading Psalm 34: 1-10, 22
Third Reading Matthew 5: 1-12
Fourth Reading Revelation 7: 9-17

Sermon: *Where Are Our Saints?*

Hymn:

For All the Saints

1. For all the saints, who from their labors rest,
who thee by faith before the world confessed,
thy name, O Jesus, be forever blest.
Alleluia, Alleluia!
2. Thou wast their rock, their fortress, and their might;
thou Lord, their captain in the well-fought fight;
thou in the darkness drear, their one true light.
Alleluia, Alleluia!
3. O may thy soldiers, faithful, true, and bold,
fight as the saints who nobly fought of old,
and win with them the victor's crown of gold.
Alleluia, Alleluia!
4. O blest communion, fellowship divine!
We feebly struggle, they in glory shine;
yet all are one in thee, for all are thine.
Alleluia, Alleluia!
5. And when the strife is fierce, the warfare long,
steals on the ear the distant triumph song,
and hearts are brave again, and arms are strong.
Alleluia, Alleluia!
6. From earth's wide bounds, from ocean's farthest coast,
through gates of pearl streams in the countless host,
singing to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost:
Alleluia, Alleluia!

From *The United Methodist Hymnal* Copyright 1989 The United Methodist Publishing House, 711.

Benediction:

We have been blessed by our saints. May we go forth to be a blessing to others. Amen.

Response:

God Be with You till We Meet Again
God be with you till we meet again;
by his counsels guide, uphold you,
with his sheep securely fold you;
God be with you till we meet again.

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All Saints Sunday

Where Are Our Saints?

11/1/2020

Revelation 7: 9-17

This passage from Revelation is one of my favorites. I know we tend to think of Revelation as a very dark book full of frightening images, but I believe that is true if you have never really read Revelation. Revelation is very much a book of hope with many beautiful images. This passage to me is one of the most beautiful images we have in the whole canon of Scripture.

The 144,000 from the tribes of Israel have been sealed with the mark of God on their foreheads. Now the 144,000 is not meant to be taken literally but is a number that represents completeness. All the servants of God from Israel have been marked with God's seal.

Now from all corners of the earth, from every nation, every language, all people come before the throne of God and before the Lamb. They have been robed in white, a sign of being purified. They carry palm branches, reminiscent of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. They come from every direction, more and more, they just keep coming, more than one could count. It would be so many that it would make the crowd coming for a Carolina football game during State Fair week look like a COVID-19 gathering.

People come from all over to gather around the throne of God. For what? For judgement? No, they come to worship and sing praises to God day and night.

Who are these people? They are those that came out of the great ordeal. What this great ordeal is scholars are not certain. It might be those who were martyred, but given the number and completeness it probably would mean, in John's context, those who resisted the ostracism and rejection that came from living according to the teachings of Christ over the rule of the society. They were those that remained faithful to the teaching of Christ.

For those we honor today, they have joined that great multitude that is gathered around the throne of God. They remained faithful to the teaching of Christ and lived a Christ-like life. Therefore, they have been purified and restored into the presence of God. There they no longer suffer any affliction. They have been guided to the springs of the water of life: no thirst, no hunger, no tears, just being around the throne of God worshipping and singing praises.

Marvin is now in that multitude. Lisa is now in that multitude. Carolyn is now in that multitude. Dorothy is now in that multitude. Miriam is now in that multitude. Margie is now in that multitude. Marian is now in that multitude. Tommy is now in that multitude. Mary Alice is now in that multitude. Every one that we have named in our hearts today is in that multitude.

And we who remain faithful shall be in that multitude.

Those we have named today are our saints. Those we have named aloud and in our hearts are those that have in some way impacted our lives. There is some lesson that we have learned from them that we wish to emulate. Normally when I do funerals, I try to focus on what lessons we learned from the person. For many of these, that has not been the case as we have been limited to brief graveside services most of this year. So, as I call each name again, reflect upon how that person may have impacted your life and what traits and characteristics you may wish to emulate from that person.

(Say the name of each person and reflect upon their life)

Now take a moment to reflect upon those that have been unspoken, those that each of us have named in our hearts. How has that person impacted your life and what do you want to emulate from them?

(Take a few moments of reflection upon the lives of your saints)

Each of those whom we have honored today has become part of our lives. They all have touched us in some way, perhaps some more than others. We are better people for knowing them. They each have in some way been an example of faithful living. May we honor their memory by living the lessons we have learned from them, so we may be reunited with them around the throne of God.