

WELCOME

Hello!

Welcome to digital Worship on this 14th Sunday after Pentecost, hosted by the Southwest California ELCA Synod.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Before we begin, I want to take a moment to acknowledge and honor the land upon which many of us gather to worship on today.

We are gathered today on the occupied territory of the Chumash and Tongva peoples and on the larger occupied land of Turtle Island. I ask you to join me in acknowledging the Chumash and Tongva communities, their elders both past and present, as well as future generations. The ELCA and SWCA Synod also acknowledges that they were founded upon exclusions of Indigenous peoples and lament the violence performed upon countless communities, including those on whose land this institution is located. This acknowledgement demonstrates a commitment to the process of working to dismantle the ongoing legacies of settler colonialism.

Let us now share in a moment of silence to honor the history of this land and those who have cared for her.

Thank you.

INVOCATION

My name Drew Stever, a candidate for ordination in this synod and the executive director of Queeranteen Camp, an online camp for LGBTQ youth created during this pandemic. Today's worship includes songs from Lucia Davidson, a member at Holy Trinity, Thousand Oaks.

It has been 24 weeks since California issued a lockdown order in response to this pandemic.

That's 168 days.

That's a lot of Zooming.

A lot of not hugging.

A lot of Netflix.

A lot of alone time. Or, maybe a lot of together time.

We are all coming to this morning's worship with so many different things on our minds.

Is my job secure?

When can I hug my grandkids, my parents, my friends again?

How long will this last?

Many of us are coming this morning's worship

Depressed, anxious, not having slept well in months.

We miss being in our sanctuaries together.

We miss passing the peace - in person! - together.

We miss how it was.

But we know going back to how things were is not possible.

So we remain hopeful for that what comes next

is BETTER.

With that, welcome to worship. May you find comfort that God will still be praised, even in ways we haven't even thought of yet.

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

We begin this morning by confessing our shortcomings, mistakes, and flaws. We ask forgiveness of God, one another, and ourselves.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God,

It seems that every day,
every hour, we need reminding of your grace
and your forgiveness.

We confess that we have not trusted you, God.
We have mistreated your creation and have denied
your presence in our lives.
We try to control to control every situation
and often leave no room for the Spirit's work.

We often try to apply our own names to you,
and always come up short on measuring your abundance.

Forgive us, Lord.
Help us to forgive ourselves and the ones who have harmed us.

We are doing the best we can with what we have.
Help us to remember who you are, Messiah.
Help us to remember who we are, your church,
built on the rock of your love
and called to proclaim your good news to all.
Amen.

Children of God,
by God's radical love,
We receive an abundance of grace.
Through ✝ Christ, we are forgiven for all our mishaps,
shortcomings, downfalls, blemishes, and flaws.

Let us now live in joy because God's love overwhelms our hearts. Amen.

SONG

Lucía Salazar-Davidson

Seek Ye First, WOV #783

READING

Matthew 18:15-20

If your sibling sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and

if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

“Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

“Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Thanks be to god.

HOMILY

Drew Stever, Candidate for Ordination in the SWCA Synod

SONG *The Canticle of the Turning, ELW*
#723 Lucía Salazar-Davidson

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

We gather to pray for our community, ourselves, and our world.

God, your creation is hurting.
We are tired of trying to “wait this thing out”
and we want it all to turn into something better.
Help us to see your goodness in all of this.

Your creation is anxious.
We do not know when it will be safe to hug our loved ones again.
We do not know when we won’t be on edge going to the grocery store again.
We do not know if our jobs are really secure.
We do not know many things
and that does not sit well with us.
We like to know.
We feel secure in having plans.
We find comfort in having control.
Help us to remember that in you, we are secure.
We are sustained.
We are comforted.

All of your creation is buzzing, God.
From the hummingbirds to the lizards,
from everyone starting new school years,
We give thanks to you, God, for all that you have created
and we ask that you guide as we strive to create better environments
for all of your children to grow.

We send these prayers to you, God, Creator of all that lives and moves and
breathes, in your Son Jesus' name,

Amen.

MEDITATION MOMENT

We are entering into the season of fall. I know we're in southern california, so it might not look like it all that much, but in Minnesota, we knew it was fall because the State Fair had just ended, school was starting, and the air was getting a little bit crisper.

Fall is also a time when farmers take a moment to look at their harvest, their bounty. They take a moment to pause and be grateful for all that the earth has given them and their families.

This pandemic has forced us to change our expectations, often simplifying them. This can be hard to do when you are so used to things being done a certain way for so long.

Let us know take a moment to reflect on the things we are grateful for this week.
Maybe it's that you had your first virtual doctor's appointment.
Maybe you got a job.
Maybe you got the first Pumpkin Spice Latte of the season.
Maybe it's the simple fact that you are still here.

Whatever it is, I pray that gratitude surrounds your hearts and your homes as we continue to navigate this season of our lives together.

BLESSING

Receive this blessing:

May the presence of a Comforting God be known to you.

May the guidance of the Sacred Teacher direct you on your way.

May the thoughts of Holy Wisdom fill your mind, heart, and spirit.

Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace and remember to love like children.

Thanks be to God, and we will!