

# Prince of Peace Lutheran Church

“Gathered by Grace - Sent to Serve”

## “Straight from the Heart” Third Sunday of Easter April 26, 2020

### WELCOME

*Thank you for worshipping with us today!*

*If you would like to support the mission of Prince of Peace so that we can continue worship, community outreach, and other ministries, you can give any amount by cash, check, online, through the Give+ app by Vanco, or by sending a text to 833-394-7887 (text your dollar amount and follow the prompts). Thank you for your generosity.*

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### **ORDER OF SERVICE**     *The assembly speaks the bold verses*

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#### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Each week includes sharing food, so preparations include **making a meal or snack** to be ready at the time of the gathering. Other items to gather are a **candle** and a **“worry stone”** with a heart painted or drawn on it or some other word or picture that reminds you that Jesus is present with you. You can also make or color a heart every time you hear the word “heart.”

#### *Silence for Individual Reflection and Prayer*

#### SPENDING TIME TOGETHER

We continue with our Easter Season because Easter isn't just one day. It is the message of God's desire for us to live fully every day. The early church practiced their hope in this way:

*“Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people.” (Acts 2: 46-47a)*

We create a “temple” of worship in our hearts that connects us across boundaries, distance, and time. But as we share this worship, we will stay connected. At the “heart of the matter,” we are connected through the Spirit that makes us one in love.

## **OPENING ACT OF CENTERING OUR HEARTS AS ONE**

We are going to center our hearts as one to begin.  
Let’s take a deep breath together.

I invite you to place your hand on your heart and  
let’s lightly tap together in a slow heartbeat rhythm:

Holy Living God,  
Heartbeat of Creation,  
help us to take this time to center on you,  
for you made us,  
you gave us life,  
and you continue to be with us  
every moment...  
every breath...  
every step.

Hear this assurance from God:  
Be still, O heart, you’re not alone,  
your beat is shared with me.  
Come now, and calm, and center here,  
you’re mine, secure and free.

Let’s take another deep breath, making sure our shoulders and any  
tension we feel in our bodies is letting go with the breath.  
Let’s take another one.

Let us pick up our heart stone, sometimes called a “worry stone,”  
and let our touch on its surface remind us that God’s touch is  
within us, between us, and around us.  
As close and real as this object is in our hands right now,  
is how close Love is to us always.  
Let us imagine letting go of our worries for now into God’s heart of  
love.



Feed our bodies and our spirits...  
**Feed our bodies and our spirits...**  
with your comforting presence...  
**with your comforting presence...**  
so that we might be your comfort to others...  
**so that we might be your comfort to others...**

Bless this food...  
**Bless this food...**  
and break open our hearts...  
**and break open our hearts...**  
Bless this drink...  
**Bless this drink...**  
and pour out your love...  
**and pour out your love...**  
Amen...  
**Amen!**

And now I invite you to pick up a plate of food or a cup of drink on the table and let us say the one word that is at the heart of the matter in every blessing we do at our tables, repeating after me...

“Grateful!”  
**“Grateful!”**

Let us begin to “break bread” while we “break open the Word” in our scriptures.

## **BREAKING OPEN THE WORD WITH SCRIPTURE**

### **Scripture: Luke 24:13-35**

On that same day, two disciples were traveling to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. They were talking to each other about everything that had happened. While they were discussing these things, Jesus himself arrived and joined them on their journey. They were prevented from recognizing him.

He said to them, “What are you talking about as you walk along?” They stopped, their faces downcast.

The one named Cleopas replied, “Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who is unaware of the things that have taken place there over the last few days?”

He said to them, “What things?”

They said to him, “The things about Jesus of Nazareth. Because of his powerful deeds and words, he was recognized by God and all the people as a prophet. But our chief priests and our leaders handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him. We had hoped he was the one who would redeem Israel. All these things happened three days ago. But there’s more: Some women from our group have left us stunned. They went to the tomb early this morning and didn’t find his body. They came to us saying that they had even seen a vision of angels who told them he is alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found things just as the women said. They didn’t see him.”

Then Jesus said to them, “You foolish people! Your dull minds keep you from believing all that the prophets talked about. Wasn’t it necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and then enter into his glory?” Then he interpreted for them the things written about himself in all the scriptures, starting with Moses and going through all the Prophets.

When they came to Emmaus, he acted as if he was going on ahead. But they urged him, saying, “Stay with us. It’s nearly evening, and the day is almost over.” So he went in to stay with them. After he took his seat at the table with them, he took the bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Their eyes were opened and they recognized him, but he disappeared from their sight. They said to each other, “Weren’t our hearts on fire when he spoke to us along the road and when he explained the scriptures for us?”

They got up right then and returned to Jerusalem. They found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying to each other, “The Lord really has risen! He appeared to Simon!” Then the two disciples described what had happened along the road and how Jesus was made known to them as he broke the bread.

### **Scripture: 1 Peter 1:20-23**

Christ was chosen before the creation of the world, but was only revealed at the end of time. This was done for you, who through Christ are faithful to the God who raised him from the dead and gave him glory. So now, your faith and hope should rest in God. As you set yourselves apart by your obedience to the truth so that you might have genuine affection for your fellow believers, love each other deeply and earnestly. Do this because you have been given new birth—not from the type of seed that decays but from seed that doesn’t. This seed is God’s life-giving and enduring word.

## MEDITATION

### HYMN

*“Day of Arising”*

#374  
(vs. 1 & 3)

**Day of arising,  
Christ on the roadway,  
unknown companion walks with his own.  
When they invite him,  
as fades the first day,  
and bread is broken, Christ is made known.**

**Lo, I am with you,  
Jesus has spoken.  
This is Christ's promise, this is Christ's sign:  
when the church gathers,  
when bread is broken,  
there Christ is with us in bread and wine.**

Text: Susan Palo Cherwien, b. 1953 Text © 1996 Susan Palo Cherwien, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

### ACTION RESPONSE

I invite you put both hands on your heart, close your eyes for just a moment, and think about a message of love. Then reach out and connect your hands with those who are with you, around or across the table. If you are alone, reach out your hands to your sides and imagine two people on either side of you who you want to offer love to right now. You can reach out with text or call later to let them know you were thinking of them at this moment. In this moment, we just let this gesture plant more seeds of love, straight from the heart. It is a great way for us to continue to tell people “The peace of Christ be with you” or “The love of Jesus is with you.”

### BREAKING OPEN OUR LIVES WITH DISCUSSION

Our theme scripture says, “they ate their food with glad and generous hearts.” One way we can be glad and generous is to share about how we are finding strength, hope, love, and peace in these days. This is part of “breaking bread” with each other as we break open our hearts to one another as well. In this week’s scripture, Jesus shared with people straight from his heart.

What have you found yourself saying to people “straight from the heart” in the last few weeks that you didn’t say as much before?

Have you heard or seen something this week that felt loving? Or if

you can't think of something from this week, what do you have in your memory as something that was loving? Let's take some time at our tables to talk about these questions or write them down in our journals or on notecards.

*Let's complete this sentence, "I see Love shared (in/when/where) \_\_\_\_\_."*

**BREAKING OPEN OUR HEARTS WITH PRAYER**

- For those who have lost loved ones
- For those who are sick and recovering
- For those who are caring for loved ones who are sick at home
- For those who are caring for persons in medical care
- For those who are separated from loved ones
- For those who are feeling alone and isolated
- For those who are helping and are so very tired
- For those who are struggling to find friends, food, and comfort
- For those who are afraid

Let us take another breath of Spirit as our "Amen." We know that God sends out our prayers and the Spirit, Breath of God, is blowing from within us outward, as a Spirit of Compassion and Presence.

**PRAISE GOD!**

We know Jesus is present among us...  
**We know Jesus is present among us...**  
even in this very home...  
**even in this very home...**  
We will not let fear be louder than love...  
**We will not let fear be louder than love...**  
but with glad hearts and rejoicing souls...  
**but with glad hearts and rejoicing souls...**  
we will sing God's praise...  
**we will sing God's praise...**  
for we are Easter People...!  
**for we are Easter People!**

**HYMN**

*"Let Us Break Bread Together"*

**#471**

**Let us break bread together on our knees;  
let us break bread together on our knees.**

## ***Refrain***

**When I fall on my knees,  
with my face to the rising sun,  
O Lord, have mercy on me.**

**Let us drink wine together on our knees;  
let us drink wine together on our knees. *Refrain***

**Let us praise God together on our knees;  
let us praise God together on our knees. *Refrain***

Text: African American spiritual

## **HAVE GOODWILL**

What message does the world need? Perhaps you will decide to create a way to let more and more people know the message of Christ, “You are not alone. I am here. I love you straight from the heart.” What can we do to create more love in our household, in our family, in our relationships with those we cannot be with right now? How can we offer love to those who are working so hard right now? How can we offer love to those who feeling short on love, peace or comfort? Make your own plan today.

## **BENEDICTION**

*(based on Psalm 16)*

As we close this time together, remember:  
God is always with you. No matter what you face,  
no matter what trials or hardships come your way,  
God is right beside you, offering love straight from the heart,  
guiding and directing your path.  
So, acknowledge your fear and your worry  
and know it is as true and holy as any feeling,  
including joy and hope and love.  
Take heart! This is the heart of the matter.  
**Amen.**

## **POSTLUDE JAM**

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“Gathered by Grace ~ Sent to Serve”

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## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church is a community who believes in God’s love, knows Jesus as Savior, and is blessed by the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Thankful for these gifts, we gather to pray and praise, explore God’s Word and its meaning for our lives, strengthen each other in our witness, and serve each other and our neighbors in the world.

## **VISION STATEMENT**

Gathered by Grace ~ Sent to serve.  
*Core Values: Spirituality, Community,  
Grace, Helping Others, Creativity.*