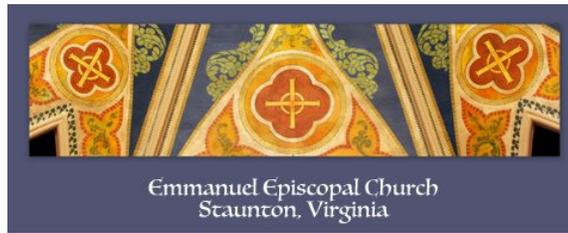


March 15, 2020



**Good Morning!**

**Welcome to Morning Prayer. I invite you to light a candle, enjoy a deep breath and take a moment to center yourselves as we move into Morning Prayer. While I wish we could all be physically together in worship this morning, I am thankful to be together in spirit.**

**In Christ's love, Shelby+**

**Jesus said, "If anyone will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Mark 8:34**

**Confession of Sin**

**Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.**

**Silence may be kept.**

**Officiant and People together, all kneeling**

**Most merciful God,**

**we confess that we have sinned against you**

**in thought, word, and deed,**

**by what we have done,**

**and by what we have left undone.**

**We have not loved you with our whole heart;**

**we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.**

**We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.**

**For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,**

**have mercy on us and forgive us;**

**that we may delight in your will,**

**and walk in your ways,**

**to the glory of your Name. Amen.**

**Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins  
through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all  
goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in  
eternal life. Amen.**

**The Invitatory and Psalter**

**Officiant: Lord, open our lips.**

**People: And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.**

**Officiant and People**

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as  
it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.**

**Venite Psalm 95:1-7**

**Come, let us sing to the Lord; \***

**let us shout for joy to the Rock of our salvation.**

**Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving \***

**and raise a loud shout to him with psalms.**

**For the Lord is a great God, \***

**and a great King above all gods.**

**In his hand are the caverns of the earth, \***

**and the heights of the hills are his also.**

**The sea is his, for he made it, \***

**and his hands have molded the dry land.**

**Come, let us bow down, and bend the knee, \***

**and kneel before the Lord our Maker.**

**For he is our God,**

**and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand. \***

**Oh, that today you would hearken to his voice!**

**The Lessons**

**[https://www.lectionarypage.net/YearA\\_RCL/Lent/ALent3\\_RCL.html](https://www.lectionarypage.net/YearA_RCL/Lent/ALent3_RCL.html)**

**Sermon: "In God's Hands"**

**Do you feel as though you are in the Twilight Zone? As the pandemic makes its way through the world and into our lives, many things have been changing at lightning speed. Sports events have been canceled.**

Schools have been shut down. Emmanuel's high school students' musicals have been cancelled. The stock market has been on a roller coaster. Even church services have been suspended! For many of us, this is a first. The atmosphere seems "other worldly," kind of eerie at times. With all of the change in motion, and with the threat of COVID-19 in our midst, life feels pretty strange. And yet we look outside and the sun is still shining, we can still hear birds singing, we're still breathing. God is still with us.

The Psalm for today (which happens to also be the Venite of Morning Prayer) reminds us that God is the Rock of our salvation. *In his hand are the caverns of the earth...the sea is his for he made it and his hands have molded the dry land. We are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand.* Notice this word "hand" that just keeps appearing. God's hands.

And what about our hands? No doubt, you've heard how important it is right now to WASH YOUR HANDS. I trust that you will indeed keep washing your hands. But right now, would you take a look at your hands?

They are a precious part of you that God can use to bless the world around you. While we've been asked to refrain from shaking hands for the time being, your hands can still be used to do many things: to praise God, for one! Yes, even we normally sedate, orderly Episcopalians can raise our hands in praise of the God who has this world in God's care. (If this embarrasses you to do in public, try it in the privacy of your own closet and see how liberating it is!) Your hands can be used to phone or email a loved one or to someone who might be fearful or lonely. Your hands can be used to use social media for the encouragement of others in this time of confusion and uncertainty. Your hands can be used to make soup to take to a sick person.

One member of our Emmanuel family recently went to an icon writing workshop where she "wrote" an icon of the Virgin and Child. (This is the term used for creating icons, rather than "paint") It's a beautiful piece that she will share with us when we can all be together again. To write an icon requires several days of applying the paint layer upon layer, and

each day begins with prayer. She shared the following prayer used at her workshop:

*My hands are blessed. With my hands I give; I serve; I do; I create. With my hands I receive; I accept. My hands, extended in friendship, serve to bring peace to the world. My hands, dedicated to helping others, lift burdens from the weary, support those who stumble, reach out to the fearful, and sooth the troubled.*

*My hands are blessed. God blesses them. He blesses all their work, too. No task is too menial for my hands to do. The work of my hands takes on character of my thought concerning that work. If I take pride in the work that my hands accomplish, I am a blessing in whatever capacity I serve....*

*God blesses my hands and I see them as perfect, capable, kind, whole, and willing. My hands are open to give and to receive.*

I am reminded of your hands – the hands I often meet with the Eucharistic bread. Your beautiful open hands are perfect in God’s eyes – hands that are arthritic, young hands that have ink drawn all over them, hands that have bandaids on them, hands that are clean, hands that have permanent stains on them, hands that are rough and worn and wrinkled, and hands that are smooth and have painted nails. These are the hands that God would have you use to receive his goodness and to bless others.

Our psalm reminds us of the beauty that God’s hands have created. If we think about Jesus and his hands, we remember that Jesus used his hands to create (he was a carpenter after all), to heal, to bless, even to calm storms. Jesus’ hands were nailed to a cross in his ultimate act of self-giving, in his great gift of love. His hands, like yours, are perfect in God’s eyes.

So take a look again at your hands. I invite you to sit still for a few minutes at the end of this sermon with your eyes closed and your hands

open on your lap. Will you consider that God's work is and can be done through your hands? How can you invite God's Spirit to work through your hands, to create, to heal, to bless, to even calm storms of fear and uncertainty, that love might be made known. Keep washing your hands, and avoid shaking hands right now, but in God's creative and life-giving spirit let God use your beautiful hands to bless the world. Remember we are in God's hands even in and especially during this Twilight Zone of a time!

Amen.

### The Apostles' Creed

**Officiant and People together, all standing**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth;**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.**

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit  
and born of the Virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

**He descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again.**

**He ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

### **The Prayers**

#### **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,  
for ever and ever. Amen.

**A**

- V. Show us your mercy, O Lord;  
R. And grant us your salvation.
- V. Clothe your ministers with righteousness;  
R. Let your people sing with joy.
- V. Give peace, O Lord, in all the world;  
R. For only in you can we live in safety.
- V. Lord, keep this nation under your care;  
R. And guide us in the way of justice and truth.
- V. Let your way be known upon earth;  
R. Your saving health among all nations.
- V. Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten;  
R. Nor the hope of the poor be taken away.
- V. Create in us clean hearts, O God;  
R. And sustain us with your Holy Spirit.

### **Prayer list**

**The Dioceses of Haiti and Leeds and their  
leaders**

**Aline**

**Tyree Bryant**

**Dolores Curry**

**Jean Sydnor**

**Mamie Curran**

**Judy Armstrong**

**Bob and Joan Aron**  
**Baird**  
**Jason Christian Beyer**  
**Michael Brookings**  
**Tina Cass**  
**Alice Cassada**  
**Carol Childress**  
**Pat Clough**  
**Connie**  
**Nancy Carter Crump**  
**Sue Daniels**  
**Bunny and John Davenport**  
**Eric**  
**Susan Griffin**  
**Gwenda**  
**Mabel Hill**  
**Mary Hendricks**  
**Willis Howard**  
**Art Hurme**  
**David Lott**  
**John Lane**  
**John Lotz**  
**Mary**  
**Hal and Peter Meyers**  
**Danny Morgan**  
**John Mozian**  
**Courtenay Mullen**  
**Parker**  
**Retta**  
**Ralph Steger**  
**Steve**  
**Susana**  
**Tom**  
**Taybronne**  
**Wesley**

**All those affected by COVID-19**

**Birthday Prayers:**

**Judith Parrish**

**Sarah Coleman Flores**

**Richard Ferguson**

**Kohen Kier**

**Matthew Hargrave**

**Anniversaries:**

**John and Bunny Davenport**

**Webster and Joy Maughan.**

**A Collect for Grace**

**Lord God, almighty and everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day: Preserve us with your mighty power, that we may not fall into sin, nor be overcome by adversity; and in all we do, direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**A Collect for Guidance**

**Heavenly Father, in you we live and move and have our being: We humbly pray you so to guide and govern us by your Holy Spirit, that in all the cares and occupations of our life we may not forget you, but may remember that we are ever walking in your sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, you stretched out your arms of love on the hard wood of the cross that everyone might come within the reach of your saving embrace: So clothe us in your Spirit that we, reaching forth our hands in love, may bring those who do not know you to the knowledge and love of you; for the honor of your Name. Amen.**

**A Prayer of St. Chrysostom**

**Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication to you; and you**

**have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name you will be in the midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of your truth, and in the age to come life everlasting. Amen.**

**The peace that passes understanding keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God and of his Son our Savior Jesus and the blessing of God almighty, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you!**

**Let us bless the Lord.**

**Thanks be to God.**

---