

Order of Teaching and Prayers for Sunday, April 19, 2020
Zion Lutheran Church, Ridgeville Corners, Ohio

This Order of Teaching and Prayers (adapted from Matins) is part of Zion Lutheran's ministry during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic and "Stay at Home" orders in the state of Ohio. Orders for festival days and Sundays will continue to be made available as long as normal worship opportunities are not available. I will post audio recordings of these orders on the appointed day on www.zionrco.org. You are invited to listen and pray with me and my wife at that time, or any time after. Pastor Carl Rockrohr

The teaching for this week continues with the sermon series "God's and His People" started at Zion Lutheran on January 26th. The creation of the world and human beings and the fall into sin in Genesis 1-3 were taught before the season of Lent began. This week the narrative of Cain and Abel in Genesis 4 is considered. Next week the topic is the Flood as recorded in Genesis 6-9.

Invocation and Opening Verses

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth will declare Your praise.

Make haste, O God, to deliver me;
make haste to help me, O Lord.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen. Praise to You, O Christ, Lamb of our salvation.

Scripture Reading Genesis 4:1-16 ESV

1 Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, "I have gotten a man with the help of the Lord." 2 And again, she bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a worker of the ground. 3 In the course of time Cain brought to the Lord an offering of the fruit of the ground, 4 and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering, 5 but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell. 6 The Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? 7 If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it."

8 Cain spoke to Abel his brother. And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him. 9 Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?" 10 And the Lord said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground. 11 And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. 12 When you work the ground, it shall no longer yield to you its strength. You shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth." 13 Cain said to the Lord, "My punishment is greater than I can

bear. 14 Behold, you have driven me today away from the ground, and from your face I shall be hidden. I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me.” 15 Then the Lord said to him, “Not so! If anyone kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold.” And the Lord put a mark on Cain, lest any who found him should attack him. 16 Then Cain went away from the presence of the Lord and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

O Lord, have mercy on us. **Thanks be to God.**

Scripture Reading John 20:19-31

19 On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.” 20 When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. 21 Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.” 22 And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. 23 If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld.”

24 Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. 25 So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe.”

26 Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” 27 Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe.” 28 Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” 29 Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

30 Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

O Lord, have mercy on us. **Thanks be to God.**

Responsory

Sing to the Lord and bless His name, proclaim His salvation from day to day.

Give to the Lord all glory and strength, give Him the honor due His name. Alleluia, Alleluia.

Now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that sleep.

Give to the Lord all glory and strength, give Him the honor due His name. Alleluia, Alleluia.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.
Give to the Lord all glory and strength, give Him the honor due His name. Alleluia, Alleluia.

Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.
And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Teaching

Genesis 4:3-7 – In the course of time Cain brought to the Lord an offering of the fruit of the ground, 4 and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering, 5 but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell. 6 The Lord said to Cain, “Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? 7 If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for you, but you must rule over it.”

John 20:27-31 – 27 Then he [Jesus] said to Thomas, “Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe.” 28 Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” 29 Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of our hearts be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, our Rock and our Redeemer.

The writer of the Hebrews gives further insight into what happened in the Cain and Abel narrative:

By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which he was commended as righteous, God commending him by accepting his gifts. And through his faith, though he died, he still speaks. (Hebrews 11:4)

The sinfulness and rebellion of the first sin of Adam and Eve in Genesis chapter 3 did not just end with the first sin. Sinful human ways increased and were passed on to the descendants of Adam and Eve. Sin became so pervasive among humans that the Lord told Cain that sin was crouching, ready to spring on to Cain like a wild animal trying to attack him.

Both sin in our human nature and demons of hell attack the souls of human beings. Peter wrote, “Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.” (1 Peter 5:8) The devil and demons are evil spirits existing outside humans and tempt us to disobey God and lose faith in Him. Our human nature is infected with sin and constantly tempts us as well. (Ephesians 2:1-3)

Cain's offering to God was not given in faith. When an external action, even like an offering to God, is not given in faith and thankfulness to God it is not acceptable to God. Without faith Cain's offering was unacceptable to God, but Cain's sin did not stop there. Cain became jealous and angry with Abel whose offering was acceptable. God even warned Cain that his thinking was going wrong, that sin was ready to pounce on him. But Cain went the way of sin, choosing covetousness, jealousy and anger, and even murder.

God's people are not immune to temptations to sin. Even the disciples of Jesus, who saw Jesus in person, heard His teachings and witnessed His miracles, sinned. Peter denied Jesus and the disciples abandoned Jesus. Thomas refused to believe that Jesus had risen from the dead. Even Christians with the power of God's Spirit were warned by Peter that the devil wants to destroy them.

Christian faith is trust, hope, thankfulness, obedience and joy to be in relationship with Jesus. The Holy Spirit creates this faith in a person through God's Word and Holy Baptism. Faith looks to Jesus for deliverance from sin, death and the devil.

The devil and sin in humans continually tempt God's people to defy, disbelieve, and deny Jesus Christ. Even when we are saved through faith in Jesus, the devil wants us to rebel!

But the Good News about Jesus Christ is that Jesus cuts through all the confusion, chaos, sin, evil and death *by His own power and victory* – through His crucifixion and resurrection – *for us!!*

Jesus did not require His disciples to be extra brave, and to go and look for Him, and to go and be martyrs before Jesus would give them peace, hope and forgiveness. NO!! It is important to think very clearly about Jesus' love for us: Jesus appeared to the disciples and Jesus gave the disciples His peace *even while* they were afraid; *even before* they witnessed about Jesus; *even in the midst* of their confusion and doubting!! The disciples could not save themselves or earn God's peace – the risen Jesus Christ gave salvation to His disciples as a gift.

In the midst of our troubles, fears, illnesses, sins and doubts Jesus comes to us and gives us His peace. Even though we doubt; even though we are afraid; even though we have sinned; He calls us to trust in Him for He has overcome all.

Please pray with me: Dear Lord Jesus, I need Your forgiveness and peace. I need Your wisdom in this time of chaos. Help me to firmly believe that You hold all things in Your hands. Amen.

Now may the peace of God that passes all understanding guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Amen.

1. My faith looks up to Thee,
Thou Lamb of Calvary, Savior Divine.
Now hear me while I pray;
Take all my guilt away;
O let me from this day Be wholly Thine.

2. May Thy rich grace impart
Strength to my fainting heart; My zeal
inspire!
As Thou hast died for me,
Oh, may my love to Thee
Pure, warm, and changeless be, A living
fire!

3. While life's dark maze I tread
And griefs around me spread, Be Thou my
guide;
Bid darkness turn to day,
Wipe sorrow's tears away,
Nor let me ever stray From Thee aside.

4. When ends life's transient dream,
When death's cold, sullen stream Shall o'er
me roll,
Blest Savior, then, in love,
Fear and distrust remove;
O bear me safe above, A ransomed soul!

Prayers

Hear us, merciful Father, as we pray for ourselves, for the Church, for our nation and for all conditions and manner of people. *Brief silence*

God of mercy, keep us from the doubts and fears that cripple us and prevent us from knowing the fullness of Your saving peace and gracious presence. Teach us to trust in Your Word and to believe with all our hearts, minds, bodies and strength in Jesus Christ, crucified for our sins and raised for our justification. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of grace, bestow upon Your Church Your Holy Spirit and all the gifts that come down from on high. Grant to us faithful pastors who will preach faithfully and ears to hear Your Word proclaimed. Give us boldness in our witness before the world and courage to speak Your name without fear. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of power, give courage and strength to those persecuted for the faith, and comfort the families of the martyrs. Keep Your Church from following the winds of change, and make her steadfast in the doctrine of the apostles and the faith once delivered to the saints. Help us to admonish those who have fallen away with Your Word and to restore with gentleness those who have wandered from the truth. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of might, counsel the nations and their leaders in the paths of peace and justice. Bless us with wise, faithful and just leaders who will protect the sanctity of life and defend us against all enemies, foreign and domestic. Make us wise and discerning citizens who use the gift of liberty for noble purpose. Take away confusion, chaos, and jealousies. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of love, teach us to love one another as You have loved us. Guide us so that in our neighborhoods and communities we may manifest the love of Christ as well as His strength. Deliver us from all that would threaten our homes and families. Protect the police, firefighters,

disaster-relief workers and medical personnel who attend to us, as well as the workers who deliver food and all essential goods and services for us. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of comfort, give Your aid and relief to all who suffer want or need, to the sick in their afflictions, to those troubled in mind, and to those to whom death draws near [*especially* _____]. Heal and sustain them according to Your gracious will, and preserve them in faith to eternal life. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

(In Zion Lutheran's prayers: Margaret; Norma; Lillian; Carolyn; Charlotte; Sandy; Henry; Lincoln; Isaac; Julie; Loretta; Bryceton; Cathie; Karlyn; Mark; Dan; Kathy; Shirley; David; Zach; daughter of Julie; Family of Diane; Pastor Scheiwe and Pastor Berlin.)

O blessed God and Lord, hear the prayers of Your people and teach us to trust in Your will to answer our prayers with all that is needful and beneficial, both for us and for all for whom we have prayed; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Lord, have mercy; **Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy.**

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 and ever. Amen.

O Lord, hear my prayer. **And let my cry come to You.**

Let us bless the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all. **Amen.**

Hymn *Amazing Grace*

1. Amazing grace how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!

I was once lost but now am found,
Was blind but now I see!

2. The Lord has promised good to me,
His Word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures.

3. Through many dangers, toils, and snares
I have already come;

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His grace has brought me safe thus far,
His grace will lead me home.

4. Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail
And mortal life shall cease,
Amazing grace shall then prevail
In heaven's joy and peace.

5. When we've been there ten thousand
years, Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we'd first begun.

You are invited to listen to hymns and use other resources at www.zionrco.org.

Order of Prayer adapted from “Matins,” *Lutheran Service Book*, Concordia Publishing House. Prayer adapted from LC-MS Three-Year Series Prayers for April 19, 2020. <https://www.lcms.org/worship/three-year-series-prayers>