



# Together on the Way of the Cross

Praying, reflecting and journeying  
together during Lent

6–12 April 2020



THE  
LUTHERAN  
WORLD  
FEDERATION

A Communion  
of Churches

# Introduction

The season of Lent is a time for introspection, prayer, fasting, and sharing. While many believers will embark on their own individual journey of spiritual renewal, Christian life goes beyond the privatized individualistic endeavor. Our pilgrimage on earth is both personal, communal, and even global. It is about our life together, and the call to mutually encourage one another during trying times.

We offer this guide to accompany fellow believers in affirming ‘togetherness’ within the communion of Lutheran churches worldwide. It is organized in a threefold format based on Luther’s guide for doing theology through *Oratio* (prayer), *Meditatio* (meditation), and *Tentatio* (trial/struggle). This season, in particular, offers an opportunity to immerse ourselves in a world where:

there is the *tentatio*, testing (Anfechtung). This is the touchstone. It teaches you not only to know and understand but also to experience how right, how true, how sweet, how lovely, how mighty, how comforting God’s word is: it is wisdom supreme. (Martin Luther, *Luther’s Works: Career of the Reformer*. Vol. 34, 286-87.)

Inspired by Luther, let us cultivate the art of praying and reflecting together as a communion in Christ. As we discern God’s wisdom through agonizing struggles in our world today, often wounded and marred by division, disappointment, and despair, our faith gives us hope to persevere by journeying together no matter what.

Indeed, God accompanies each of us step by step together on the way of the cross.

Note: All prayers are cited from *Koinonia: Services and Prayers* (Geneva: The Lutheran World Federation, 2004). All scriptural texts are from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV).

# Monday, 6 April 2020

## Praying Together

Give us thankful hearts, merciful God,  
for these and all your gifts,  
and keep us mindful of the needs of others,  
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

## Reflecting Together

Isaiah 42:1-9

Hebrews 9:11-15

**John 12:1-11**

<sup>7</sup> Jesus said, "Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. <sup>8</sup> You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me."

## Journeying Together

We are thankful for women who help us recognize the significance of the presence of Christ in our midst.

# Tuesday, 7 April 2020

## Praying Together

Send your angels, O God,  
to guide us on our way  
so we return to our homes  
in health, in safety and in joy.

## Reflecting Together

Isaiah 49:1-7

1 Corinthians 1:18-31

**John 12:20-36**

<sup>35</sup> Jesus said to them, “The light is with you for a little longer. Walk while you have the light, so that the darkness may not overtake you. If you walk in the darkness, you do not know where you are going. <sup>36</sup> While you have the light, believe in the light, so that you may become children of light.”

## Journeying Together

Let us resist dark forces that aim to overtake us and lead us astray; rather let us keep our focus on the light that offers true guidance towards ‘health’, ‘safety’ and ‘joy’.

# Wednesday, 8 April 2020

## Praying Together

O God, you made heaven and earth,  
***watch over us.***

O God, you embrace your people,  
***keep us from harm.***

O God, you protect us as we come and go,  
***bless us now and forever.***

## Reflecting Together

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Hebrews 12:1-3

**John 13:21-32**

<sup>21</sup> After saying this Jesus was troubled in spirit, and declared, “Very truly, I tell you, one of you will betray me.”

## Journeying Together

May our hearts not be hardened by the experiences of betrayal; but rather let us draw strength from one who fully understands the deceptiveness of the human heart.

# Maundy Thursday, 9 April 2020

## Praying Together

O gracious God,  
you gave us Holy Communion as a meal of love,  
and in the washing of the disciples' feet  
your Son modeled for us the life of service.  
Give us life and strength  
through the mystery of this sacrifice,  
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

## Reflecting Together

Exodus 12:1-4, (5-10), 11-14  
1 Corinthians 11:23-26  
**John 13:1-17, 31b-35**

<sup>14</sup> So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. <sup>15</sup> For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you.

## Journeying Together

We desire to move beyond a symbolic act and instead serve in concrete ways, ensuring that Christ-like servanthood is authentically embodied in our life together and service to all.

# Good Friday, 10 April 2020

## Praying Together

Almighty and ever-living God,  
in your tender love for us  
you sent your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ,  
to take upon him our nature,  
and to suffer death upon the cross.  
May we walk in the way of his suffering  
and share in the joy of his resurrection,  
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

## Reflecting Together

Isaiah 52:13-53:12

Hebrews 10:16-25 or Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9

**John 18:1-19:42**

<sup>37</sup> Pilate asked him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice." <sup>38</sup> Pilate asked him, "What is truth?"

## Journeying Together

In a world bombarded with falsehood and lies, we follow the way of the cross that upholds truth even if it invites scorn and suffering.

# Holy Saturday, 11 April 2020

## Praying Together

Oh that you would hide me in Sheol,  
that you would conceal me until your wrath is past,  
that you would appoint me a set time, and remember me!  
If mortals die, will they live again?  
All the days of my service  
I would wait until my release should come.

– *Job 14:13-14*

## Reflecting Together

1 Peter 4:1-8

**John 19:38-42**

<sup>40</sup> They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews.

## Journeying Together

May we accompany those who feel crippled by fear, but who still reach out to do what is right and good behind the scenes away from publicity.



# Easter Sunday, 12 April 2020

## Praying Together

God of all goodness,  
because of the resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ  
the morning of the new creation dawns.  
The day of the Lord has come,  
the wells of salvation have opened.  
In Holy Baptism you have joined us  
to Christ's triumphal procession.  
Grant to us all the spirit of the resurrection,  
that we may forever praise you  
and rejoice in the gift of salvation,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, forever and ever.

## Reflecting Together

John 20:1-18

Jeremiah 31:1-6

**Acts 10:34-43**

<sup>39</sup> We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; <sup>40</sup> but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, <sup>41</sup> not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.

Jesus is Lord of all! The message of peace already began “after the baptism that John announced.” God anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit and with power (Acts 10). This message of peace – the Easter message – can already be recognized in Jesus' life, doing good and healing all those who were oppressed by the devil. The resurrection is God's on-going work, in which now all the baptized are engaged. We are called to heal those

oppressed by the forces – powers and principalities – that oppose God and that separate human beings from God and from one another. The resurrection is the breaking open of prison doors, the dismantling of barriers, the deconstruction of walls, and the liberation from all that has confined and oppressed and divided individuals and peoples and nations from one another.

The proclamation of the Resurrection inserts us into the trajectory of God's action, into God's plan that God is continually accomplishing, defeating death in its many forms and inviting all into a reconciled community. This mystery of reclaiming and reconciling the world to God's self is revealed by God to those who are "witnesses," to those who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead (Acts 10), to those who have shared a meal with him. The meal of new creation is also a table of invitation. The risen Christ is waiting and calling. All are to come and partake as God's goodness permeates all the world. The meal itself breaks down the barriers. And in this festive meal, God is recognized.

Alleluia! Christ is Risen! Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

## Journeying Together

We are not called to be judges but to be faithful witnesses who "testify that [Christ] is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead."