

**ORDER OF WORSHIP with TEXTS**  
**Sunday, April 26, 2020**  
**Homework: Patience**

I. **Countdown** (Homework Square Graphic)

II. **Prelude** (Diane)

*Take the Name of Jesus with You*

WH Doane, arr. Lynette Maynard

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III. **Intro Reading: Psalm 130:5-6 CEB** (Zeta)

I hope, Lord. My whole being hopes, and I wait for God's promise.

My whole being waits for my Lord - more than the night watch waits for the morning;  
yes, more than the night watch waits for the morning!

IV. **Song: *My Soul Waits for the Lord***

*from Songs for the Masses*

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guitar, Jon Warner

Out of the depths I cry to you O Lord

O Lord hear my voice

Let your ears hear my cry for mercy

O Lord hear my voice

My soul waits for the Lord

In his word I put my hope

My soul waits for the Lord

More than the watchmen wait for the morning

More than the watchmen wait for the morning

If you Lord kept a record of sins

O Lord who could stand

But with you there is forgiveness

Therefore you are feared

Israel hope in the Lord

With the Lord there is mercy

And with him is full redemption

He himself will redeem

**V. Welcome** (Rachael)

- A. Greet
- B. Introduce the new series and today's topic
- C. Please join me in our opening prayer.

**VI. Opening Prayer** (Rachael)

**Holy God, even from a distance, our spirits are gathered together to worship you. Bless us with your presence and open our hearts to your Spirit. Hold us in grief, sustain us in waiting, help us to consider the needs of others, and draw us always nearer to you. We pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.**

**VII. Video: Patience in Quarantine** (Nono Anderson)

**VIII. Song/Hymn - *Great is Thy Faithfulness***

Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father  
There is no shadow of turning with thee  
Thou changest not,  
Thy compassions they fail not  
As thou hast been, thou forever wilt be

Great is thy faithfulness  
Great is thy faithfulness  
Morning by morning new mercies I see  
And all I have needed thy hand hath provided  
Great is thy faithfulness Lord unto me

Summer and winter and springtime and harvest  
Sun, moon, and stars in their courses above  
Join with all nature in manifold witness  
To thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love

**IX. Reading: James 5:7-11 CEB** (Laura)

Therefore, brothers and sisters, you must be patient as you wait for the coming of the Lord. Consider the farmer who waits patiently for the coming of rain in the fall and spring, looking forward to the precious fruit of the earth. You also must wait patiently, strengthening your resolve, because the coming of the Lord is near. Don't complain about each other, brothers and sisters, so that you won't be judged. Look! The judge is standing at the door!

Brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord as an example of patient resolve and steadfastness. Look at how we honor those who have

practiced endurance. You have heard of the endurance of Job. And you have seen what the Lord has accomplished, for the Lord is full of compassion and mercy.

**X. Video: WHAT IS PATIENCE** (Harris)

Patience is what you need when you have to wait for something.

Sometimes you want to do something right away, but your mom says,

“No. You can’t ride your bike right now. You have to wait until after dinner.”

That is so frustrating. It seems like the thing you want is so important right at that exact moment.

Sometimes I get angry when I don’t get what I want. Sometimes I act grumpy to people.

Sometimes I try to skip the waiting and just take care of it myself.

That’s not showing patience.

Being patient means you have to trust that the people who love you will do what is best for you, even if that means you have to wait for an activity or a toy or for dinner to be ready.

It’s the same with God.

God wants us to trust in how much we are loved

and to remember that God always wants what is best for us.

And God always keeps promises, but sometimes it takes longer than we want,

or sometimes the promises happen in a different way than we expected.

We might think it would be better to just take care of things ourselves instead of waiting for God.

That might feel better for a little bit, but it never turns out as great in the end

as it does when we wait for God.

No matter what, God is always faithful. That means God always does what’s best for people.

But waiting is still hard. It takes practice to get better at it.

I’m going to practice taking a deep breath and counting to ten when I feel impatient.

Dear God, help me to be patient and to trust in you. Amen.

**XI. Song** (Dave)

*Herbert the Snail*

from *Music Machine: The Fruit of the Spirit*

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**XII. Offering Intro/Prayer of Dedication** (Laura)

**XIII. “Offertory” Music: *Morning Dew*** (John H)

**XIV. Video: Patience** (Jen Brown)

**XVI. Gospel Reading: Luke 24:13-35 Common English Bible (CEB) (Elaine C)**

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.

## **XVIII. Sermon**

Sermon for UMCA on 4/26/2020, Homework: Patience

Today is the third Sunday of Easter. Easter is not a moment or even one morning with big celebration or even a long afternoon of egg hunting and scalloped potatoes. Easter is a season. We cannot do Easter in a moment. Jesus rising up, and the followers of Jesus waking up from their fear and their grief and their doubt and rising up and understanding what has happened and then believing what has happened and then figuring out what to do about it...well, all of that takes some time.

Some things just take time. And patience.

We live in a world that values speed. Instant messaging, constant contact, prime shipping, priority mail, 24-hour access. To live in this fast-paced, results-based, I-want-it-and-I-want-it-now world as followers of Jesus, we have to work harder than ever to develop patience as a spiritual discipline. Some things, we might discover, are worth waiting for.

Like the two followers of Jesus we meet this morning discovered, walking along the road from Jerusalem to Emmaus. Heading home, back to the lives they lived before Jesus. Back to whatever they were, whomever they were before these last few years with the wandering teacher had inspired them to join the crowds and follow him. It was over. This movement of liberation and love, of sacrifice in service to the common good, of pursuing justice for all people, of turning the structures of privilege and power upside down, of good news and abundant welcome for the poor and suffering.

It had been exhilarating. It was compelling. Jesus had seemed like the real deal, like someone who might actually make a difference. But it was over now, in one long night of violence and execution. Jesus was dead. His closest followers had fled into hiding, and almost as quickly as it had begun, it was over.

Heads hanging, grief weighing heavy on their shoulders, impatient to get back to normal – to the way things were before – Luke tells us that Cleopas and his companion started on the road home, a seven or so mile walk out of Jerusalem to their home in Emmaus.

You might recall that for the past two Sundays we've read the version of Easter events from John's gospel. As John told the story, Mary Magdalene saw Jesus that first Easter morning and he sent her out to tell the disciples that he was, indeed, risen. The disciples struggled to believe her, but later Jesus appeared to them, showing them his wounds and breathing God's Spirit into their gathering and offering them a word of peace to still their troubled spirits. Of course, if you were with us last Sunday, you know that one of the disciples named Thomas missed this reunion with Jesus and struggled to believe that what the others told him had happened was true. And so, Jesus returned again, offering Thomas the same signs he had shown to the others of his resurrection.

And as Bishop Ough so beautifully suggested, Thomas became a wing walker – hesitant, but willing to be invited to reach just beyond his grasp to encounter the risen Christ.

Luke recalls the events a bit differently, or at least finds different details and moments to be the most important to share. In Luke's telling of Easter, the women who had been close to Jesus went to the tomb early in the morning, and they did not find Jesus there. It was the angels who told them the news that Jesus had risen from the dead. And when they returned to tell the disciples, Luke says these words seemed to them an idle tale. Only one disciple, Peter, went to the tomb to see it empty for himself. Scholar Shannon Michael Pater writes, They have heard that it is "Easter" from the women at the tomb, but as of yet they do not know it in the marrow of their soul.

On that same day, Luke tells us, these two followers of Jesus began their journey home. Grief stricken, shocked, uncertain what consequences would await them when they returned to their village carrying the shame of having followed yet another messiah who didn't follow through. Luke says they were discussing all that had happened. Even this soon, just days after the crucifixion, I imagine them wondering how much of it had ever been real. The adrenaline wearing off and the sparkle fading from their eyes. I don't blame them for being impatient to return home and get back to normal, do you?

Who has time to wait for God to deliver on the promise when they've already given up so much to follow Jesus in the first place?

Who has time to wait for God to deliver on the promise when the festival has ended and traveling is allowed and the families and responsibilities they left behind need their attention?  
Who has time to wait for God to deliver on the promise when the authorities are threatening to kill anyone who was part of this man's following?

Who has time to wait for God to deliver on the promise?

New life sounded so compelling when Jesus spoke of it,  
justice and equity for all people worth great sacrifice,  
peace and healing within reach.

But who has time to wait?

These followers of Jesus were headed home, back to the way things used to be. Back to their contingency plan.

Until they are interrupted.

Jesus, the RISEN CHRIST, comes alongside them and joins them, walking.  
But the text says, their eyes were kept from recognizing him. Perhaps a lesson in patience.

Even yet, as they have given up their trust in him so quickly, he will spend some time with them. They tell their new friend what they've been discussing, amazed that he hasn't heard. Everyone is talking about Jesus. The messiah who wasn't. The one who worked miracles, and preached redemption. The one who we thought would bring liberation for our people. But it's been three days since he died, and nothing. So we're headed home.

Jesus becomes frustrated with their description of events. Had they learned nothing? Were they ever even listening at all? How could they have followed him and missed the whole point so completely?

He calls them slow of heart to believe. Which, I think, is a kind of impatience. Instead of being quick to trust in the promise and ready to believe in what he had said to them before his death, they were slow to believe and impatient to get back to their old lives.

They were soon to learn a lesson that many of us have learned. One that is sometimes exciting and other times devastating. The lesson? I think Thomas Wolfe said it best: You can't go home again.

It was the summer before sixth grade when my family moved from Marion, Ohio back to Pittsburgh. Several months after our move, we returned to Marion for a special event at our old church. We went out to lunch at the local Isaly's diner and my mom gave me a quarter so I could use the pay phone. (If you don't know what a pay phone is, ask me later!) I dialed the number of Amanda, my best friend for the three years we had lived in Marion. She answered the phone.

I said, "Amanda! It's Rachael! I'm at Isaly's!" I could hardly contain my excitement, since the rest of my news was that my parents said they could drop me off to play at her house for a few hours that afternoon.

She replied, slowly, "Rachael-who?"

I was devastated. I explained who I was and she was happy to talk to me, but then she had to go because she was getting together with her friends from school. Her new friends. That day, I learned the meaning of the phrase. You can't go home again.

Home didn't exist anymore. Not the way I had known it. Some things, sure, were exactly the same, like the pay phone and the ice cream at Isaly's. But some things had changed. The world had changed, moved forward in time. The Marion I returned to was not the same as the one I had left.

Cleopas and his companion were ready to get home again. They wanted to go back to normal, to the way things were before they'd run off with Jesus. But they would soon learn that the world had changed. And they had also changed.

As they approached Emmaus, Jesus continued to walk as if he were going on to another destination. This time it was the two followers who asked Jesus to be patient, to stay with them and receive their hospitality. Jesus agreed.

And when at the table Jesus took bread and blessed it and gave it to them, they recognized him. It was time for them to see and understand who he was. That they might believe. As soon as they understood who was in front of them, Jesus vanished and they were once again left to discern whether they had really seen him at all. And would their belief endure this time around? They didn't stay in Emmaus. They couldn't stay there, not knowing what they knew. The world had CHANGED. Jesus was alive. Risen, just as he said. The old normal they had been in such an impatient hurry to return to did not exist anymore. So, they went back to Jerusalem that same night to find the disciples and corroborate what the women had declared that very morning.

Jesus is risen. Just as he said. In our impatience we lost sight of him right there next to us. Still, he was faithful. He stayed the course with us, he reminded us. We can go on. We can endure. We can hold firm to the hope that he has given us and stay the course in the work of seeking justice, liberation, and God's kingdom for all people. We can be patient with ourselves and one another, but our patience need not be simply waiting, hands folded, watching the world turn around us. We are invited to an active waiting, a patience that lives in anticipation and in the direction of God's kingdom as we wait.

I'm so thankful for Nono and Jenny who offered us their stories of patience this morning. Patience is living in quarantine with three generations under one roof, loving one another and making the best of the moments that have been given. Trusting that God will sustain and finding ways to serve others.

And patience is navigating the long arc of grief over a lost loved one. Grief that does not go away, as we might wish it would, after a year or a decade or two decades. Patience is facing that grief, naming it, feeling the pain and the loss of it, and even still anticipating with hope that God's faithfulness will come through at exactly the right time.

So many of us are experiencing grief, so many of us are living in situations intensified by our present collective reality. And all of this waiting, all of this uncertainty, all of this impatience – it can cause us to want to go back to normal, to return to the way things were.

Dear ones, I cannot tell you where we are headed. I don't know when it will again be safe to gather in small groups or when we might be able to come together in our sanctuary. I don't know how long we will endure losses and grief that seem unbearable.

But I do believe today's gospel gives us a reminder.

The world has changed. Whatever is coming won't be the same as what we left behind. And certainly there is grief in that truth. And there is also opportunity. Jesus is risen, just as he said.



May we hear this good news and believe it.

May we be actively patient, doing the work we can do right now, right where we are, to build our new home, our new normal. And when it is time, let's embrace one another with eyes opened to truly see what God is doing among us. May we be fully prepared to carry on the movement Jesus started.

Amen.

**XIX. Hymn: *Cry of My Heart***

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It is the cry of my heart to follow you  
It is the cry of my heart to be close to you  
It is the cry of my heart to follow  
All of the days of my life

Teach me your holy ways O Lord  
So I can walk in your truth  
Teach me your holy ways O Lord  
And make me wholly devoted to you

Open my eyes so I can see  
The wonderful things that you do  
Open my heart up more and more  
And make me wholly devoted to you

**XX. Pastoral Prayer**

<https://www.marquette.edu/faith/prayer-for-a-pandemic.php>

May we who are inconvenienced  
remember those whose lives are at stake.

May we who have no risk factors  
remember those most vulnerable.

May we who have the luxury of working from home  
remember those who must choose  
between preserving their health or making their rent.

May we who have the flexibility to care for our children  
when their schools close

remember those who have no options.

May we who have to cancel our trips  
remember those that have no place to go.  
May we who are losing our margin money  
in the tumult of the economic market  
remember those who have no margin at all.  
May we who settle in for a quarantine at home  
remember those who have no home.  
During this time  
when we cannot physically wrap our arms around each other,  
let us yet find ways to be the loving embrace of God  
to our neighbors.  
Amen.

**XXI. The Lord's Prayer**

**XXII. Spoken Benediction, Share Practicing Patience**

[https://www.anokaumc.org/hp\\_wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Planting-Patience.pdf](https://www.anokaumc.org/hp_wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Planting-Patience.pdf)

**XXIII. Sung Benediction: *The Lord Bless You and Keep You***

**XXIV. Postlude**

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