



# GOBIN CHURCH

A United Methodist Community for All

## **Monday, March 30, 2020**

**Scripture:** Psalm 143 <https://tinyurl.com/psalm143>

**Ponder:** In this psalm the writer shares the despair that some of us have felt. “For the enemy has pursued me, crushing my life to the ground, making me sit in darkness like those long dead.” (May you not know this feeling). The blessing in these psalms is their expression of our hardest emotions, despair, fear, anger, grief, combined thankfully with a closing affirmation of faith. “In your steadfast love ... I am your servant.” The despair, fear, anger and grief of dark nights of the soul may be fully felt, even by Jesus. In the end, we are not alone.

**Pray:** Holy One, we may be crushed, seeing darkness all around. Yet even in this time, you claim us. We are not alone. Amen.

**Act:** Do you recognize the signs of despair, suffering, anguish in others? It does not always look as we expect. At the post office, in the grocery, across the street, where can you shine a light in someone’s darkness?

<https://tinyurl.com/uct8rwk>

**Family Time:** My children used to play Dark Tag, and some of the most fun happened at parties where everyone had a new flashlight of their own. For younger children, it might be possible to play “Find the Family” when all the lights are off inside. Giving the flashlight to the youngest first is a good idea, and accompany the little ones. This works best for families of 6.

## **Tuesday, March 31, 2020**

**Scripture:** 2 Kings 4:18-37 <https://tinyurl.com/t9ndxlv>

**Ponder:** Look at the painting by Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, “Elisha and the Shunammite woman”, 1649. Read the story again and find the moment captured in this scene. <https://tinyurl.com/u5v6svr>

**Pray:** Holy One, We come to you believing you have power over all things, and over the death in our own lives: death of hope, of relationships, of energy for action. Stretch yourself upon us. Amen

**Act:** Find a seed, plant a flower or a little garden, mulch, water and protect it. Write a letter of forgiveness. Sit down with (wait, no, call) an old friend and agree not to talk politics.

**Family Time:** Listen together to Peter Gabriel’s song, “In Your Eyes” and sing along if you can, and dance together. <https://youtu.be/evN6DIGPIJM>  
I know this song is too old for some and too young for others.

### **Wednesday, April 1, 2020**

**Scripture:** Matthew 22:23-33 <https://tinyurl.com/srqo4c5>

**Ponder:** Does Jesus mean that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are alive in the heart of God? How can someone who lived thousands of years ago still be alive? How can the ones you loved who have died be alive in your hearts?

**Pray:** Holy One, we do not easily understand what you have meant by eternal life. Is all life eternal for you? Help us understand. Amen.

**Act:** Take a flower and visit the grave of someone you know. Look at a photo before you go if you can. What can you remember about them? Use your imagination and tell them a story about your day. Give thanks for their life. Leave the flower.

**Family Time:** Spend a few minutes at the dinner table telling what you remember about one person who now lives in the heart of God. For teens who like scary movies, consider watching "The Sixth Sense" (trailer is also scary <https://youtu.be/UjOUYriND3c>) and discuss what it means to be alive. (Maybe nobody likes scary movies these days?)

### **Thursday, April 2, 2020**

**Scripture:** Psalm 31:9-16 <https://tinyurl.com/twokpm6>

**Ponder:** Jesus has set his face toward Jerusalem. Do you think he might have recited this psalm as he travelled?

<https://tinyurl.com/wl9yzve>

**Pray:** Holy One, some of us may know what it means to walk toward our own deaths, but we don't like thinking about it at all, how can we walk with Jesus when we would rather not face the facts? Strengthen us for this journey. Amen.

**Act:** Memorize the last two verses. Or the last one. Recite it before you sleep.

**Family Time:** Write the last verse out in large letters, cut them out and scramble them. See who can put them together, and who can do that with the most patience. When finished playing, turn them into a poster and place it where it can be pondered. (The bathroom?)

### **Friday, April 3, 2020**

**Scripture:** Job 13:13-19 <https://tinyurl.com/tykey5o>

**Ponder:** As we read these words we are again tempted to hear them as if spoken by Jesus. This passage comes during the time Job is declaring he will not curse God and die because of the undeserved suffering he has experienced. <https://tinyurl.com/tsuevo2>

**Pray:** Holy One, we are outraged when our own suffering is not deserved. "It is not fair!" we cry. Our minds boggle at the undeserved suffering of current day heroes. Sure the care providers should be safe! Help us understand the gift of faith that stays near to you even in the depths of darkness. Amen

**Act:** As you watch or listen to or read the news today, look for the heroes. Find the helpers. Rejoice in the beauty or acts of kindness. Because it is really hard to walk the whole way with Job and Jesus through this Lenten season.

**Family Time:** Agree as a family for one person to pray "Lord, have mercy," when you see or hear something that makes you sad or anxious. The next person can say "Christ have mercy!" Together all can say, "Lord, hear our prayer!"

### **Saturday, April 4, 2020**

**Scripture:** Mark 10:32-34 <https://tinyurl.com/stqoud8>

**Ponder:** Why would Jesus want to describe what was going to happen to him to his disciples? How did he think this would affect them? It varied individually, I am sure. Some believed and set their faces with him toward the end. Some scoffed or disbelieved, because they couldn't face facts or didn't really know him. When someone tells us something painful for us to hear, do we lean in or run away?

**Pray:** Holy One, we really never know what we will do when facts are dire and tragedy approaches. Help us prepare as much as we can bear, and may we be faithful despite our fears. Amen.

**Act:** Ponder what facts you have not faced yet. Take care of something you have dreaded and delayed right now. You know what this is.

**Family Time:** Talk with your loved ones about how to make preparations responsibly. Ask, what is most important for them to remember when 1) leaving home or 2) packing for a journey or 3) staying at home a long time? If age appropriate, talk about how to be prepared if someone gets sick or dies. And then practice distraction and delight. A walk? Some ice cream? A movie that makes you laugh? Baking bread together? Realize together that preparation is NOT all of life. This is not what Jesus looked like, but I loved the variety of children and the dancing.

<https://pin.it/6gDEjsb>