

“Where Can I Go?”

January 31, 2021

Zoom Worship Space opens at 9: 45 a.m.

“God is Holding Your Life” Week 3 Threshold

**Turn now your gaze upon the earth
Where is the One who never sleeps?
We call the One who guards you now,
Your spirit safe in holy keep.**

**God is holding your life
God is holding your life
God is holding your life, we believe**
[repeat refrain]

Opening Prayer

Let us pray. Dear and Near God,
you never leave our side.

Open us this day to feeling and knowing your presence deep in our hearts
so that we might show forth love with the same confidence,
offering your reign of right relationship on earth as it is in heaven.

**People: We praise you for your close attention,
holding our lives together in care.**

Amen.

Psalm Reading

This week’s Psalm, 139 verses 1-18, brings home this message: we are in an intimate relationship with God. There is nowhere we go that God is not present—no state of our being that results in our being abandoned. God has knit us together, has woven us, knowing us from before our beginning. God, indeed, is holding our lives.

ADONAI, you’ve searched me and known me.
You know my sitting down and my rising up,
you discern my thoughts from afar.
You trace my journeys and my resting places;
and are acquainted with all of my ways.

Indeed, there is not a word on my lips;
but you, O God, know it altogether.
You press upon me, behind and before,

and lay your hand upon me.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,
it is so high I cannot attain it!

Where can I go then from your Spirit,
Where can I flee from your presence?
If I climb up to heaven, you are there;
if I make the grave my bed, you are there also.
If I take the wings of the morning,
and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,
even there your hand will lead me,
and your right hand hold me fast.

If I say, "Surely the darkness will cover me,
and the light around me turn to night,"
darkness is not dark to you;
the night is as bright as the day,
darkness and light to you are both alike.

You created my inmost being
and stitched me together in my mother's womb.
For all these mysteries I thank you—
for the wonder of myself,
for the wonder of your works—
my soul knows it well.
My frame was not hidden from you
while I was being made in that secret place,
knitted together in the depths of the earth;
your eyes saw my body even there.

All of my days
were written in your book,
all of them planned
before even the first of them came to be.

How precious your thoughts are to me, ADONAI!
How impossible to number them!
I could no more count them
than I could count the sand.
But suppose I could?
You would still be with me!

We come to our moment of "Selah"— that mysterious word found in the Psalms that invites us to pause. When you the sound of a gentle shower of rain, please pause ... take a peace-ful breath ... and settle your heart... Know, in the silence that will follow, that you are held in the hands of the Divine. Feel free to close your eyes if you like.

Imagine yourself held in safety, love and care. When you hear the rain shower again ...
open your eyes.

Each week we will have a moment to write prayer concerns on small pieces of paper.
We will then place these prayers in a container—a symbolic action of placing them in
God's hands, God's care.

Let us continue our prayers. I will offer a category of concern and we will allow a brief
pause, then we will respond as indicated.

Let us pray for the leaders of this world and this church community... *[pause]*

God of Justice, hear our prayer.

Let us pray for those who live in conflict around the world... *[pause]*

Prince of Peace, hear our prayer.

Let us pray for all who are experiencing loss of any kind in this pandemic... *[pause]*

Comforting Healer, hear our prayer.

Let us pray for those who are homeless, hungry and alone... *[pause]*

Emmanuel, God-With-Us, hear our prayer.

Let us pray for those who live in comfort,
for Christ-like hospitality and generosity... *[pause]*

Transforming Spirit, hear our prayer.

Holy and Living One,
for those we have named and the ones whose names we do not know,
hear our prayer.

The Peace- (cup hands and then say The Peace)

The Peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

I invite you now to make a gesture of extending your cupped hands toward others who
may be with or near you as a sign of offering the peace that Christ gives us. If you are
alone, place your cupped hands over your heart, as a sign that you send your heartfelt
peace out to the world.

Benediction

Now go in the knowledge that
God is holding your life
even as we hold each other.
You are not alone.
You are loved.
Amen.