



Worship Resources for Sunday May 10th

Easter Week Five, Liturgical Year A

We encourage you to read and reflect on these scriptures, songs, notes, and prayers as we look forward to our time of worship together this coming Sunday. You may access a PDF copy of this guide from our website, <https://emmausroadfc.org/worship-resource-20200510/>.

Please print this guide or have it handy in digital format for use during the service.

And don't forget to join us Sunday immediately following the service in our virtual foyer for a group video chat! <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/202653556>

SERMON SCRIPTURE

In the days leading up to our Sunday gathering, please read through the sermon scripture as the Holy Spirit prepares your heart for the sermon inspired by this passage.

[Acts 16:11-34 \(NRSV\)](#)

MUSIC

The music selection this week was introduced to Emmaus during Lent this year. The theme of openness before the Lord will be recurring in much of our worship this week.

Almighty God

Written by David Leonard, Leslie Jordan, and Sandra McCracken

Performed by All Sons & Daughters

YouTube: <https://youtu.be/QwPuvHRuZv0>

Apple Music: <http://bit.ly/allsandd>

Spotify: <https://open.spotify.com/track/55j9hYkg4iyHRSbyPjgpdY>

CALL TO WORSHIP

Bold lines to be read aloud corporately.

Spirit of life and love,
we gather together in different ways this morning,
from computer screens, smart phones, or tablets;

we gather, reaching out across the wires, waving from a safe distance,
to come together in community.

From living room to front porch to car seat,
we gather as we are able, ready to be of service to each other,
to the world, ready to build the community of hope and of love,
as we face this bright morning.

**We are apart, but we are together,
offering our love,
our commitment,
our hope,
and our prayers,
in service to one another and this world.**

It is a new way, but an old way,
that we come together in worship today.

(Written by Rev. Dr. Cynthia Landrum - *adapted*)

CONFESSIONAL PRAYER

Bold lines to be read aloud corporately.

**Almighty God,
to You all hearts are open, all desires known,
and from You no secrets are hid.
Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of Your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love You
and worthily magnify Your holy name,
through Christ, our Lord.
Amen.**

(The Book of Common Prayer 2019, A Collect of Purity)

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

And when you were dead in trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive together with him, when he forgave us all our trespasses, erasing the record that stood against us with its legal demands. He set this aside, nailing it to the cross. (Colossians 2:13-14 NRSV)

All: Thanks be to God

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

As we pray together, we invite you to share your own requests and testimonies with us this week. If you have a request you can share it live in our video stream chat, or you may email us at emmausroadfc@gmail.com

WORD

You may download these sermon notes in formatted PDF format here: shorturl.at/ltvG8

The Uprising of Partnership

[Acts 16:11-34 \(NRSV\)](#)

ANCIENT ROME

Our scripture takes place in Philippi, which Luke (the author) tells us is a “leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony.” Saying that a city was a Roman colony was meant to communicate a culture to the reader.

The keystone cultural message of Rome was Pax Romana which means “peace of Rome.” We know from history that the peace of Rome basically boiled down to do what Rome says and things will go well for you. Go against Rome and you will face dire consequences. You could think of it this way: the “peace of Rome” was maintaining the privilege of the rich and powerful through the threat of violence.

Motivational mottos that carry particular implications are not unique to Rome. Empires are always built to benefit and protect the rich and powerful. One temptation, especially for people of privilege living in an empire, is to believe everyone experiences the world the same way they do. To believe their reality is everyone’s reality. This simply isn’t true. A person of privilege does not experience life in an empire in the same way as others.

This meant that if you were a slave in Rome, you had plenty of Romana, but not much pax. Perhaps this is why Paul was so emphatic that, in Christ, there is neither slave or free, Greek or Jew, male or female.

Generally speaking, women were also seen as being of less importance, although there were exceptions. Some women in ancient Rome held political influence and were successful in business. Lydia was one such woman.

LYDIA

Lydia was a successful business woman who had some wealth because soft purple fabrics were expensive to make and reserved for the wealthy elite to wear or adorn furniture. Lydia was a Gentile, but described as a “worshipper of God.” This means that she had likely interacted with and been learning from Jewish women at the market and joined them in their expressions of worship. When Paul shared the Good News of Jesus, she believed his message and became a follower of The Way.

After becoming a follower of Jesus, Lydia’s whole household was baptized (note that it is referred to as her household - she is not identified by her relationship to any man) and offered hospitality to Paul and his company.

The importance of this hospitality cannot be overstated. Paul was in a Roman colony sharing a message of forgiveness and proclaiming that a peasant Jewish carpenter from Nazareth is the world's true Lord. This message was certainly a threat to Roman power, so hospitality was essential for them to continue their work. And not only did Lydia have the heart for it, she had the house for it because of her success in business.

And so you have this unlikely partnership between the Apostle Paul and Lydia, the successful and hospitable Gentile woman with an open heart.

THE JAILER

The second partnership comes after Paul and Silas are thrown in jail. After being beaten and locked up in jail, Paul and Silas were praying and singing.

And singing....Imagine singing in this situation! Their singing was an act of resistance. It was as if they were saying, "We are not intimidated by your system of oppression and domination." Their voices that carried melody also carried a message that they had somehow been liberated from living according to Roman terms.

As they were singing there was an earthquake that shook jail and opened the doors to the cells and broke the chains of the prisoners. The jailer assumed that everyone in the jail was now free and that would not sit well with Roman authorities, so rather than become subject to the system he was in charge of, he decided to end his own life. Just before he harms himself, Paul speaks out and says, "We are here!"

At this the jailer falls to his knees and says, "What must I do to experience the liberation you have?" The only way to describe someone who sings songs in a jail and then, upon being miraculously freed, decides to stay to protect their oppressor is liberated. Paul told him about Lord Jesus (you can imagine the stark contrast to the jailor who was used to addressing Lord Caesar).

This man, too, became a partner in the gospel. He invited Paul and Silas into his home where he cleaned their wounds (the very wounds that he either inflicted or oversaw). He gave them food to eat. And his whole household was baptized.

THE GOSPEL GROWS THROUGH PARTNERSHIP

In this story a Gentile woman is recognized as a key player in the kingdom of God, a slave girl is set from demon possession, and a jailer heals the wounds of an inmate. The message is clear....in the uprising of Jesus injustice will be confronted and true peace (compared to Pax Romana) will come to bear on people's lives and society. And it will be accomplished through partnerships that normal systems and structures could not allow and would not imagine. Because that's how the kingdom of God works - through partnership!

TABLE

Prepare the elements of "bread" and "wine" for use as we gather around The Lord's Table. These can be any items convenient around the home that symbolize these for you.

CONFESSION OF FAITH

Leader: In unity with the Church throughout the ages, we confess our faith:

All: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your Name,

your kingdom come,

your will be done,

on earth as in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our sins

as we forgive those

who sin against us.

Lead us not into temptation,

and deliver us from evil.

For yours is the kingdom,

and the power,

and the glory for ever and ever.

Amen.

BENEDICTION

Almighty God,

whom truly to know is everlasting life:

Grant us so perfectly to know your Son Jesus Christ to be the way, the truth, and the life,

that we may steadfastly follow his steps in the way that leads to eternal glory;

through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,

who lives and reigns with you,

in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

(Book of Common Prayer 2019, Collects of the Christian Year, Fifth Sunday of Easter)