



May 15, 2020

Lamentation and Anger

We have tried to keep a brave face on what has been going on, but this week that broke, at least for me. I don't know if it was the Supreme Court, or the weeks of physical isolation. I don't know if it was my workload, or the monotony of life under "Safer at Home."

All I know is that I am sad, and that sadness is bubbling up as anger. We have heard from experts in epidemiology and public health. We have heard from the Wisconsin Council of Churches who have studied and compiled solid advice for times such as these. Then it all seems like it doesn't matter. Everything we've studied and planned for and anticipated now seems like we were chasing after wind.

Anger without an outlet turns inward and gnaws us hollow.

That is what I feel.

I have the tools to build spiritual resilience, prayer, the Body of Christ that still gathers, assurance of God's love, but I feel like the malcontent of worldly priorities has taken a chunk out of my soul and left me with sadness and anger.

I feel like everything that I was doing was swept away and looks like it was just busy work.

That is how I feel.

I have reached the breaking point of futility and the end of meaning.

This is the point where I have no more strength and need to rely on the resilience of the Christian spirit. Or at least I hope my spirit is resilient.

The ritual of the liturgy has been my lifeline in places like this. When I lose all words and cannot form thoughts because of my unrest, I rely on other's words. Trusting that they're faith was nurtured by them and mine will be too because it is the same Holy Spirit active.

And when I find my words and they cannot do anything but expound upon the ills of the world, the wrongs perpetrated, the lives shattered, the hope stolen, and utter lack of any tint of good become the language of my lamentation.

Lament. The best source of spiritual resilience.

It reminds me of a little song I heard, "Oh, what a beautiful morning. Oh, what a beautiful day. I've got a beautiful feeling. Nothing is going my way."

Resilience built by lament is not one that ignores what is wrong with the world. It does not downplay everything going wrong and focus on, "choosing joy." The resilient spirit will stare directly at the sin, brokenness, sickness, self-centeredness, lack of compassion, power plays, one-ups-man-ship, and hate in this world and call it what it is: Idolatry!

Then it will look directly at God and call God what God is: Peace, Love, Hope, Joy. And understand that these do not cancel each other out. If anything God will place us smack-dab in the middle of every idolatry of our broken world with a peace that cannot be explained, and a love that overcomes hate, and hope that is kindled in the deepest night waiting for dawn.

So we can be angry.

We can be sad.

We can be weep when need be.

We can never forget, God's presence makes what feels like useless, like vanity, like chasing after wind, and uses it to witness to the powerful abiding presence of God's self.

Pr. Justin

High School Senior Recognition Sunday, May 17

Saint Andrew would like to recognize the high school seniors in our congregation. On Sunday, May 17 during the 9:00 online service, your confirmation mentors, pastors, and the church would like to surround you with a special prayer and blessing in worship and celebrate with you all of your accomplishments. We would also love to learn and celebrate your plans for the future, whatever those may be: working in town, heading off to college, serving our country, taking a year to think about what lies ahead, etc.



Please fill out this short [google form](#) and upload a picture that we can share with SALC.

Saint Andrew Member Survey

While we were not able to gather for Saint Andrew's anniversary as we had hoped, by the work of the Holy Spirit, we are connected as the body of Christ. Even though we cannot gather in the church building, Saint Andrew's mission and ministry have not ended. Openness is more important than ever at a time when so much is "closed."

We are worshipping online, communicating weekly via e-mail, and working through the church directory to call every member, but we recognize that we may have missed you. Through [The Member Survey](#), we hope to reach those we have missed and hear feedback on how we might better be "open" to you - and stay connected at a time when it is necessary to remain apart.

God has designed us for connection and this difficult, even traumatic, time. Our faith is put to the test. When we look for it, we can see either the worst or the best of humanity. Know that your pastors pray for you daily and are available by phone, video conversation, or e-mail.

From the Archives

May 1985 - "Consider with Me" by Rev. John Roseth

Mother's Day...reminds me of "family". Family reminds me of what I dream a church family should and can be: For a church family is a place to cry, and laugh, and vent frustrations, to ask for help-- to tease and yell, to be touched and hugged and smiled at. A church family is people who care when you are sad, who love you no matter what; who share your triumphs, who don't expect you to be perfect--just growing with honesty in your own direction. A church family is like a circle where we learn to like ourselves, where we learn to make good decisions, where we learn to think before we do, where we learn integrity and manners, where we learn respect for other people, where we are special, where we share ideas, where we listen and are listened to, where we learn the rules of life to prepare ourselves to live in the world and serve God.

Believe me--a church family is a place where anything can happen--and does if we grow up in the loving church family we are that much better off to face the world, ourselves, and others with confidence in who we are and what we can share and do to help make the world a better place for all to live.

You might say to yourself--there goes our pastor again--dreaming again--but without such a dream there is no hope--and believe me because of Jesus Christ I have hope!

Sparkhouse Family Sunday School

Sunday school is now online! We are inviting families to take advantage of the free Sunday school lesson offered weekly through Sparkhouse. [Click here](#) for the link for this week's material.



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