

Dear FUMC Heath Family & Friends,

Closing for the next two Sundays (maybe more) is how we show love. It's how we love the older folks in our church who are disproportionately affected by this virus. It's also how we love our city and medical workers by trying to slow down the spread. I hope we're saving a life.

The earliest churches met in homes around the table, so this is a chance for us to do the same. Below is simply a guide for a time of worship in a small setting.

Feel free to use whatever is helpful, and to offer any additional discussion or prayers fitting for your gathering. Whether you are worshiping alone or with family, friends, or neighbors, know that other Christians are praying some of this liturgy together in Heath, Rockwall, and around the world.

OPENING PRAYER (one person offer)

Heavenly Father, here we are in this strange time. Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here this morning, and on our friends and family gathered in their homes. Teach us to pray. Give us your peace. Help us to love. In Jesus name. Amen.

APOSTLES' CREED (say together)

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth;

And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried;
he descended to the dead;
the third day he rose from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from there he shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

SCRIPTURE (one person read or take turns reading aloud verse by verse)

Psalm 46 (NIV)

- 1** God is our refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in trouble.
- 2** Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,
- 3** though its waters roar and foam
and the mountains quake with their surging.
- 4** There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy place where the Most High dwells.
- 5** God is within her, she will not fall;
God will help her at break of day.
- 6** Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall;
he lifts his voice, the earth melts.
- 7** The Lord Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.
- 8** Come and see what the Lord has done,
the desolations he has brought on the earth.
- 9** He makes wars cease
to the ends of the earth.
He breaks the bow and shatters the spear;
he burns the shields[d] with fire.
- 10** He says, "Be still, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth."
- 11** The Lord Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.

PRAYER (one person read and others respond "**In your mercy, hear our prayers.**")

Lord God, creator of heaven and earth, we admit we don't know what's going on or what to do. So we pray...

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayers.

For those who are sick, especially those who don't have enough insurance.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayers.

For those who are quarantined, alone, or isolated,

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayers.

For medical workers and scientists trying to figure this out.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayers.

For strong and wise leadership to make good decisions.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayers.

For teachers and students missing classes.
Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayers.

For those stuck in travel.
Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayers.

For those who can't work or are losing money and jobs.
Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayers.

Against fear and the politicization of pain.
Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayers.

For a spirit of peace that doesn't make any sense.
Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayers.

To be awakened to what you are doing in the midst of this crisis.
Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayers.

To break our heart with the things that break your heart.
Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayers.

To be the hands of Jesus to those in need around us.
Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayers.

To be filled with the Holy Spirit.
Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayers.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world have mercy on us. Amen.

MUSIC & MESSAGE

<https://youtu.be/BHasZehXMqY>

CLOSE WITH LORD'S PRAYER (say together)

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.

LINKS

Click here for an abbreviated *Trackers* lesson for parents to do with their children.

Since we can't meet for Bible studies, we encourage you to click here and join the Seedbed Daily Text (Pastor Omar is a regular contributor) for a short daily Scripture reading, reflection, and prayer.

Download the full prayer of The Breastplate of Saint Patrick.

Watch previous messages here.

And be sure to follow us on Facebook for all the latest information regarding the church and our response to COVID19.