A photograph of a church interior, showing rows of wooden pews facing a sanctuary. The sanctuary features a large, colorful stained glass window and a wooden altar. The ceiling is made of exposed wooden beams. The date "MARCH 25, 2020" is overlaid at the top.

MARCH 25, 2020

AGAPE FROM AFAR

Adjusting to life amidst Coronavirus

A WORD FROM PASTOR JILL

As a way to remain connected during this time apart, I will be putting together a weekly newsletter with a reflection based on the upcoming Sunday scripture passage. I hope that by taking a few moments to reflect on the Word of God and pray, we can feel grounded and connected to God and to one another during this uncertain time. *-Pastor Jill*



One of the lectionary passages for this week is Psalm 130.

The very first line of the psalm "Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord," speaks to our lives at this time. Each day that passes because of Covid-19 isolation, we feel like we are falling deeper and deeper into the depths of despair. I wonder how our perspective might change if instead of falling deeper and deeper into despair, we fell deeper and deeper into love? During this time apart how can we focus on loving ourselves, loving our neighbors, and loving our families? What deeper love can we offer to one another and to God in this time while we "wait for the Lord" (Psalm 130:5)?

Take some time to reflect on Psalm 130 on the following pages.



Read the passage:

Psalm 130

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord.

Lord, hear my voice!

Let your ears be attentive
to the voice of my supplications!

If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities,

Lord, who could stand?

But there is forgiveness with you,
so that you may be revered.

I wait for the Lord, my soul waits,

and in God's word I hope;

my soul waits for the Lord
more than those who watch for the morning,
more than those who watch for the morning.

O Israel, hope in the Lord!

For with the Lord there is steadfast love,
and with God is great power to redeem.

It is God who will redeem Israel
from all its iniquities.

Reflect:

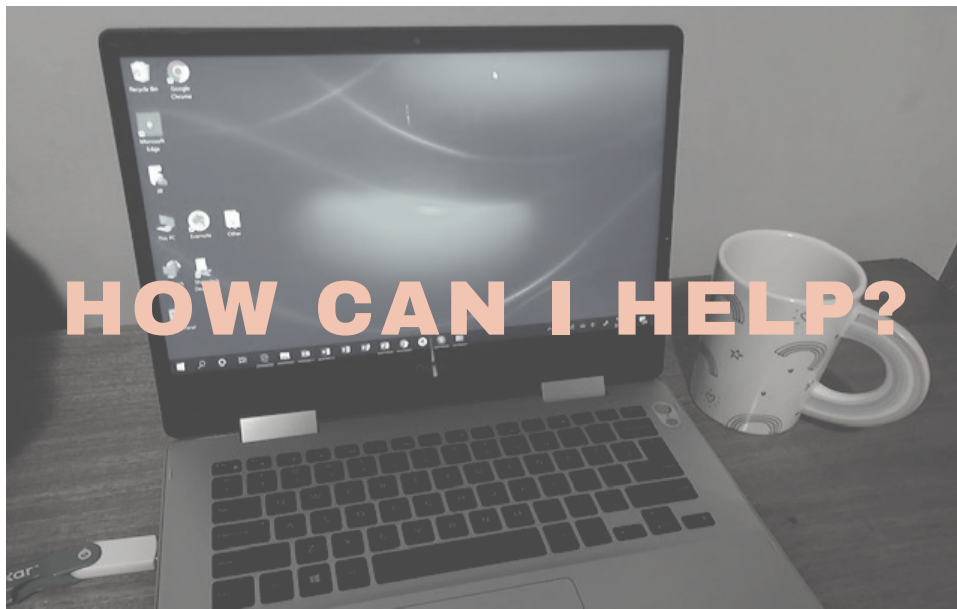
1. This psalm reminds us to wait. Are you a patient person?
2. What makes times of waiting easier for you?
3. What can you do in this time of waiting to feel more connected to God?
4. What is this passage calling you to do today? This week?

Pray:

It is so hard to wait, God. We are used to getting the things we want instantly. Help us to be patient with ourselves and others as we wait. Fill our days with reminders of your hope and love. Amen.



My soul waits for the
Lord more than those
who watch for the
morning



During this time when we feel especially helpless, there are ways to help:

- **Stay Home**

The best way to help is to stay home to protect yourself and others.

- **Give if you are able**

Make a financial donation to the Church (fcol.org) or the Outreach House (theoutreachhouse.org).

- **Check on your neighbors and friends**

Make a phone call, text, or send a note.

- **Remember we are in this for the long haul**

While the desire to help is genuine and important, staying home is the best way to help right now.

There will be plenty of ways to help once this crisis is over. Your help will be needed to provide for those who lost wages, to restock donations, and to reconnect with people in need. We will be calling on you to help once things return to "normal".

What I have been

reading:

The Astronaut Wives Club by Lily Koppel

What I have been

playing:

UnoFreak online with friends

Overcooked video game with my family

What I've been

watching:

LegoMasters

Parent Trap (1961 version)

Please reach out to staff if you have a need. We continue the work of caring for one another by meeting physical, emotional and spiritual needs.

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