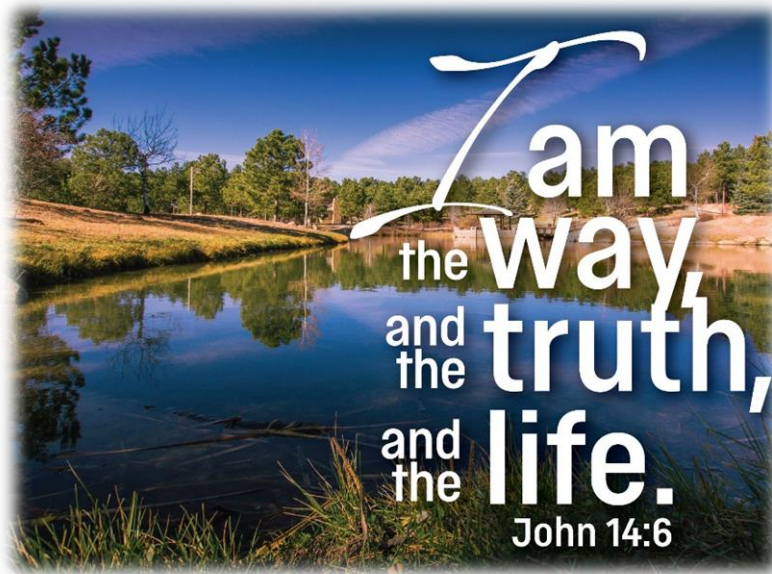


Sunday, May 10, 2020
Fifth Sunday of Easter

Grace Lutheran Church
Somers Point, NJ 08244
Interim Pastor: Rev. Kevin Hilgendorf



Jesus is our way, our truth and our life!

I want to share again this story from "The World According to Mister Rogers, Important Things to Remember by Fred Rogers."

"When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, 'Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.' To this day, especially in times of disaster, I remember my mother's words, and I am always comforted by realizing that there are still so many helpers - so many caring people in this world."

Lindsay S. Jodrey, Associate Director of Digital Learning, shares her thoughts during this time and today's Gospel. " I cannot pretend to understand where God is in the midst of a global crisis ...My heart is troubled, but I find consolation in the context of these words...which Jesus spoke as he prepared for his own death with full knowledge that his disciples would soon be overcome with grief! As Jaime Clark-Soles reminds us, the promised "dwelling places" are linked grammatically to the Johannine concept of "abiding." The "dwelling places" are the noun form of the verb Jesus uses just a chapter later when he tells the disciples, "abide in me"...to abide and dwell with God is an invitation to hear and share a comforting word.

Pastor. Erin Raffety, a parent to a child with multiple disabilities and a terminal illness, writes "at a funeral of a dear friend, we were blessed to be together and reflect upon the life of a beautiful faithful woman. ' your mother was so good at loving people,' I said to my friend. ...from a place of vulnerability, logic won't really save us from pain and grief. The paradoxical antidote thought, is to be like my mother's friend Sharman - in the face of life's cruelty to be ridiculously committed to loving people."

Again Lindsay reflects, " for many people and importantly, the living and loving, to be done in these days includes showing up as scientists, doctors, nurses, and emergency responders to those who are suffering and dying. But the rest of us there will be equally hard important work of loving fiercely, praying, honoring, naming the dead. Not shying away from grief and fear but embracing them and their pain, in patience and hope that love will survive. Our naïveté may be gone, grief and death may be more and more evident these days but perhaps there is salvation to be found...may we be reminded that the God who saves has been unleashed in the world as love incarnate. Love will conquer death. Love will find a way.

Psalm 31:15 ... "into your hands we commend our spirits for you have redeemed us, O lord, God of truth, our times are in your hands."

My mother loved singing especially *Abide With Me* at night when I and my brothers and sister went to bed. Dad did the devotions; mom did the hymn along with playing the piano. Her favorite one was the *Moonlight Sonata* by Beethoven. She did not play it perfectly but she did play it consistently until we fell asleep. The words "abide with me" bring comfort and assurance of our place with God. Jesus is our way, our truth, and our life. Let not your hearts be troubled...Jesus said... "I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also."