



First Lutheran Church, Sandpoint  
Worship - January 3, 2020

## **“These Lives Are Precious”**

Week 1

### **Prelude**

*Play meditative instrumental music that helps quiet your mind, body, and spirit for listening to God’s presence with you.*

We begin a new worship series today that we pray will bring a “breather” and a sense of assurance to us all. Life is a series of exclamations from “O No!” to “Help!” to “Oh Yeah!” We can swing between disappointment, helplessness, and gratitude on a daily basis.

The Book of Psalms knows all about this. Written over a span of time from exile and isolation to the rebuilding of the community, the poetry of the Psalms will accompany us in this series, reminding us that through it all, we can trust that God is, indeed, holding our lives.

This worship will allow us to simplify and slow down for a time. We will lean on prayer, reflection and sharing with one another; our experiences of God.

## **Threshold**

“God is Holding Your Life” - (Inspired by Psalm 121)

*[For those of you without access to the online service, we will look into creating a DVD of the music/ videos for these sections. Let the office 208-263-2048 Pastor Steve know if you could use a DVD to support your worship. Lead sheet can be found on the last page.]*

We do not live in a land ruled by Kings, as the hearers of our first Psalm of this series did. Nevertheless, the petitions of the psalmist for justice, deliverance, defense of the poor and oppressed, and peace for all peoples is an undergirding theme of our faith. We are reminded that a just society is one that proclaims “these lives are precious” and worthy of protection. God, indeed, is holding our lives. Let this *be* our “epiphany” in this new year.

**Lift up your eyes, behold the hills.  
From where will help and rescue come?  
We call the One who made the earth,  
Who bless'd the stars, the moon and sun.**

**God is holding your life  
God is holding your life  
God is holding your life, we believe**  
*[repeat refrain]*

### **Opening Collect Prayer**

*Leader:* Holy and Just God,  
You have shown us what is right and good.  
Open us this day to a vision of the world made all-right  
so that we might follow your ways and know the peace of your reign  
on earth as it is in heaven.

***People:* We praise you for your steadfast presence,  
holding our lives together in love.**

**Amen.**

**Psalm Reading: Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14**

*Lukan Psalter translation*

O God, give your anointed one your judgment—  
and your justice.

Teach your chosen one to govern your people rightly  
and bring justice to the oppressed.

The mountains will bring the people peace  
and the little hills bring justice!

Your anointed will defend the oppressed  
among the people,  
save the children of the poor,  
and crush the oppressor.

The reign of your anointed will endure  
as long as the sun and moon—  
throughout all generations.

The rule of the chosen one will be  
like rain coming down on the meadow,  
like showers watering the earth.  
Justice will flower through the days,  
and abundance of peace 'til the moon  
shall be no more.

Tarshish and the Isles will offer gifts;  
Arabia and Sheba will bring tribute.  
All rulers will pay homage,  
and all the nations will serve your anointed.

Your anointed will rescue the poor  
when they cry out,  
and the oppressed when there is no  
one to help them.

Your chosen one will take pity on the lowly  
and the poor,  
and will save their lives.

Your chosen one  
will rescue them all from violence  
and oppression,  
and will treat their blood as precious.

### **Reflection**

“Reflection” (brief sermon) prompt: This is likely a Psalm written to be repeated at coronations of kings. The attributes of a just and righteous king are listed after the first line indicates that we are about to hear just how the ruler will be judged and by what conditions justice shall be offered back to the king. Goodness begets more goodness.

The more we “discover” (epiphany... enlightenment... seeing... gift) the exchange of belovedness and praise between the Holy and creation, the more we live in a state of knowing and accepting our own beloved nature and desire that for all people.

Can we imagine that all people, with their tender hearts, are yearning for such sustenance, like tender green shoots just breaking through the soil? That we do?

Do we believe that lives are precious and a bit precarious and in need of tender care? How will we live that out this year?

Whenever there are people crushed –whether physically, economically, or socially, the whole society suffers. Let us pray for the kind of “rule” of the land that honors each precious life. And may we know we are loved and called to love in extraordinary ways.

### **Testimonies of Being Held**

*This is an opportunity to let people share how they have felt the love and support of others, of God, in this time of pandemic. Take some time now and reflect on this.*

*If you are willing, Pastor Lori and Pastor Steve would love for you to offer your thoughts, either in writing or perhaps we could record you by phone. We will share these with the congregation, so we all may begin recognizing the many ways God is present with us, our Emmanuel. Our light revealing God’s peace and love for the world.*

**Sung Reprise**  
*“God is Holding Your Life”*

**God is holding your life**  
**God is holding your life**  
**God is holding your life, we believe**  
*[repeat]*

*Silence*

**Prayers of the People**

Each week we will have a moment to write prayer concerns on small pieces of paper. We will then place these prayers in a container [*bowl, box, etc*]*—*a symbolic action of placing them in God’s hands, God’s care.

*Take a moment to do this.*

Let us continue our prayers. I will offer a category of concern and we will allow a brief pause, then we will respond as indicated. As a prayer posture for this worship series, I invite you to cup your hands, ready to receive God’s love and peace, and in preparation to be God’s love and peace in the world.

Let us pray for the leaders of this world and this church community... *[pause]*

**God of Justice, hear our prayer.**

Let us pray for those who live in conflict around the world... *[pause]*

**Prince of Peace, hear our prayer.**

Let us pray for all who are experiencing loss of any kind in this pandemic...

*[pause]*

**Comforting Healer, hear our prayer.**

Let us pray for those who are homeless, hungry and alone... *[pause]*

**Emmanuel, God-With-Us, hear our prayer.**

Let us pray for those who live in comfort,  
for Christ-like hospitality and generosity... *[pause]*

**Transforming Spirit, hear our prayer.**

Holy and Living One,

for those we have named and the ones whose names we do not know, *[pause]*

**hear our prayer.**

**Lord's Prayer:**

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen.**

**Sung Prayer Response**

*“Put Peace Into Each Other's Hands” - to the tune of  
“The King of Love, My Shepherd is.” (lead sheet at end of bulletin)*

*[sung]*

**Put peace into each other's hands  
and like a treasure hold it,  
protect it like a candle flame,  
with tenderness enfold it.**

**Put peace into each other's hands  
with loving expectation;  
be gentle in your words and ways,  
in touch with God's creation.**

**The Peace and Thanksgiving**

The Peace of Christ be with you.  
**And also with you.**

Will you make a gesture of extending your cupped hands toward others who may be with or near you as a sign of offering the peace that Christ gives us. If you are alone, place your cupped hands over your heart, as a sign that you send your heartfelt peace out to the world.

Then, write here what you are thankful for today:

## OFFERING

*If you would like to offer financial support for the ministries of First Lutheran, you can mail them to the church. 526 S. Olive, Ave. Sandpoint, ID 83864 or online at <https://firstlutheransandpoint.breezechms.com/give/online>*

*[after a moment, continue with this verse]*

**Give thanks for strong yet tender hands  
held out in trust and blessing.  
Where words fall short let hands speak out;  
the heights of love expressing.**

## Benediction

Now go in the knowledge that  
God is holding your life  
even as we hold each other.  
You are not alone.  
You are loved.  
Amen.

## Postlude

### **Worship Notes:**

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### **Songs:**

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**Prayer List:** Michelle Thurston, Lynn Franck, Ed Jewell, Chris Ingham; Randy Petersen; Charles Shobe Sr., Nicky Schripsema; Wendi Lies; Gerda Burke; Debbie Haberlock; Kara Schripsema; Kai Haberlock; Tom Taylor; Hunter Taylor; Eugene Kurwicki; Mike Shobe; Sylvia Greenwood; Janet Merrill; Jill Camp; Marguerite Suttmeier, Doris Hansen, and those on your hearts and minds today.

## Announcements:

- **Offering Envelopes for 2021** - For those who currently use envelopes for your offerings, they will be delivered with next week's worship resources. This includes Luther Park residents. If you would like a box of envelopes and haven't already been assigned a number, please call the office by January 5 and leave a message that you would like to be assigned a number. The phone number is 208-263-2048.
- **The Annual Meeting** will be January 31, 2021. The budget review will be January 17, 2021. Both will be remote meetings that can be accessed by phone and online. More information will follow with instructions on how to participate.
- **Reflections for 2021** - If you are a letter writer or not, we would like to include testimonies in our worship about how you have felt held and supported by God and others (doing God's work with their hands) this past year. You can use any kind of mail you would like or call and tell the Pastors or Council. Also, we would like to know what you are hungering for spiritually, as we begin this new year. The address for First Lutheran Church is 526 S. Olive Ave., Sandpoint, Idaho 83864. And, the church number is 208-263-2048.



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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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