

RESILIENCY: *Faith Practices in Tough Times*

We are living in unprecedented times—a health pandemic filled with economic uncertainty and unresolved racism. This added to each of our own challenges in daily life.

Grief upon grief.
Uncertainty upon uncertainty.

Where to begin?

BE OPEN

To God providing you with the strength, courage, and peace to face these times.

BE OPEN

To God guiding you into a new normal.

BE OPEN

To others who will walk with you through times of lament, fear, uncertainty and the unknown.

How to use this resource?

Use this resource alone or with a small group. Each worksheet provides a Bible passage, reflection, faith practices, and questions to ponder. Use it over several weeks, on a retreat or over a long weekend. Do not rush the process.

BIBLE FOCUS: The Gospel of Mark was written during a time of persecution and turmoil. There is a consistent thread of immediacy—such as what we experience during adversity.

Learn from those who witnessed the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. Hear the story of Jesus during his final week, but now, at this unique time in your life. Remember his pain, but also remember his promise to be with you. We are not alone. This too shall pass.

FAITH PRACTICES: During tough times, we lean on God in ways we never imagined. The ebb and flow of faith practices provides a frame-work to order our days. Throughout it all, the Holy Spirit is at work as we hear God's Word, share in Christian community, proclaim good news, serve and strive for justice. Gradually, we realize there is a lessening of our burdens, light on our path, and hope for the journey. Thanks be to God!



RESILIENCY tips

OTHERS

Live among God's People

HOPE

Hear the word
Proclaim good news

MEANING

Serve as Jesus
Strive for peace and justice



RESILIENCY TIP

...Others

FAITH PRACTICE:

HEAR THE WORD


When Jesus died on the cross, some of his followers stayed near him—despite the risk.


READ Mark 15:37, 40 -41

³⁷Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last...⁴⁰There were also women looking on from a distance; among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome. ⁴¹These used to follow him and provided for him when he was in Galilee; and there were many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem.

 *List the women followers of Jesus who witnessed his death on the cross.*

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)

 *Describe the ways these women might have supported each other in their shock and grief.*


 *How does it feel to have the support of others during tough times?*


REFLECT

COVID-19 has drawn a line between us—
an invisible dividing wall.
for the health of others and us.
Yes, we keep our distance,
unable to hold the hands
of loved ones in their final hour.

And yet,
We are not created to be distant.
We are not created to be alone.


Gracious God,
Open us to new ways and new patterns
of being connected.
Open us to those
who might share the journey
who might bear witness
to your love.

 *Take a moment to remember people who have taught you about the love of Christ.*

 *Who has shared God's love with you during the past month?*

FAITH PRACTICE:

LIVE AMONG GOD'S PEOPLE

 *List three persons who point to God for getting them through tough times. What do you admire about each of these individuals?*

 *Who might God be sending into your life right now—to share this stretch of the journey?*

PRAY *(Silently or in unison)*

Thank you for those who have blessed my life and shared my journey. Thank you for those who have inspired me. And thank you for those yet to come into my life. Amen



RESILIENCY TIP

...Hope

FAITH PRACTICE:


HEAR THE WORD

Read Mark 15:42-47

When evening had come, and since it was the day of Preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath, ⁴³Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, who was also himself waiting expectantly for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.

⁴⁴Then Pilate wondered if he were already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he had been dead for some time. ⁴⁵When he learned from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the body to Joseph. ⁴⁶Then Joseph bought a linen cloth, and taking down the body, wrapped it in the linen cloth, and laid it in a tomb that had been hewn out of the rock. He then rolled a stone against the door of the tomb.

⁴⁷Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus saw where the body was laid.

 *Despite his own shock and grief, Joseph of Arimathea acted in concrete ways:*

- 1) *What did Joseph of Arimathea ask?*
- 2) *What Joseph purchase with his own money?*
- 3) *What did Joseph physically do?*
- 4) *What did Joseph risk?*
- 5) *Did Joseph act out of hope or habit? Explain.*
- 6) *What does it mean to act out of hope and habit at the same time? Give an example.*

REFLECT

Hope ...
in what cannot be seen
in what is not yet real.

Hope ...
that this too shall pass,
some day.

BUT, until that day,
I do what I can do.
I act in what I know.

And I trust
that God's love shown in Christ
will shine on me,
will shine on my path.


Gracious God,
I just need light for one step--
and that's my next step.

 *How do you define hope?*

 *Draw a symbol of hope.*

FAITH PRACTICE:

PROCLAIM GOOD NEWS OF JESUS through WORD AND DEED

 *When you are weary, what story of Jesus gives you hope?*

 *Hope comes in many forms. What are you looking forward to this week?*

PRAY *(Silently or in unison)*

Mighty One, sometimes life gets overwhelming. It feels like a stone is rolling over me. Fill me with hope to trust in your promise of new life. In Christ, we pray. Amen



RESILIENCY TIP


...Meaning

HEAR THE WORD


Read Mark 16 1-8


¹When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. ²And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. ³They had been saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?" ⁴When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. ⁵As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. ⁶But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. ⁷But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you."

⁸So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

 *In the tomb, a young man gave the women three instructions (see below). Which of the three instructions would have been the most challenging for those women at the tomb? Explain your answer.*

- 1) *Do not be alarmed!*
- 2) *Look!*
- 3) *Go and tell!*

 *If you were given those same three instructions, which of the three would be the most meaningful? Explain.*


 *This passage ends with the women being so filled with fear that they kept silent. Give an example of when fear silenced you. What can happen when we name our fears?*

REFLECT

The world is turned upside down,
which way to turn?
I grasp for meaning

How to put life back in order
when today becomes yesterday?


Until the world makes sense again,
I can be kind.
I can serve as Jesus.
I can be fair.
I can be a voice for the voiceless
I can ...
until meaning comes again.

 *In baptism, we are sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever. That's God's promise to us. How does this promise give you meaning?*

FAITH PRACTICE:

Serve as Jesus

Strive for peace and justice

 *How might you serve as Jesus during the coming week?*

 *How might you work for peace and justice during the coming week?*

PRAY *(Silently or in unison)*

Holy One, you sent the scared and amazed women from the empty tomb to tell others about the risen Christ. But this is today. I am here. What might I do? How might you use my gifts? I wait for you to give me meaning. Amen



MAKE A PLAN

For Resiliency

OTHERS:

 Who can you share this journey?

 How will you reach them?

 By when? (set a firm date)

HOPE:


 Name three hopes which you have today.

(This list may change over time.)


1)

2)

3)

 Make a plan to share these hopes with someone. Allow each hope to be named aloud. What are the risks and benefits to name the hope within you?

MEANING:

 What gives you meaning? If nothing comes to mind, take some time. Ask others what gives meaning to their life. Read about people you admire. What gave meaning to their life? Prayerfully consider what you have learned.

Affirmation of Baptism

Evangelical Lutheran Worship, p 236

Take a moment to affirm your baptism.

Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in holy baptism:

to live among God's faithful people,

to hear the word of God and share in the Lord's supper,

to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed,

to serve all people, following the example of Jesus,

and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth?

RESPONSE: I do, and ask God to help and guide me.

Prayer

 Write a prayer for these times.



VISION BOARD

What does YOUR resiliency plan look like?
Envision your life OVERFLOWING with others,
hope, and meaning. Be creative.

