



Wednesday Prayer

4th Sunday of Easter – Strength to be Companions

“Companion.”

The word companion appears twice in the resurrection story of Luke.

First, Jesus, unrecognized, encountered one of Jesus' disciples and his companion, Cleopas, on the road to Emmaus.

Second, Jesus appeared to the gathered disciples and un-named companions in a hidden room in Jerusalem. These companions shared in the presence of Jesus regardless of their stories, origins, dress, age, color, and language. When we read the story, we tend to include ourselves among the disciples. That is less complicated.

But I invite you to imagine you are a companion, companion to all who have suffered; like Jesus and like the disciples suffered, every-last-one. We are not bystanders, but companions to those who suffer injustice and cruelty, trafficking, and statelessness. In our companionship the prospect of our own suffering is real, and palpable, as we serve as companions and as we anguish with those by our side.

I am in Toledo, Ohio, while many of you are in the Twins Cities of Minnesota where I was born 60 years ago. I am your companion as I continue to pray for you, and those to whom you are companions these days. All of you likely are wondering about how to be companions to a wounded and vulnerable community, and to disoriented and vulnerable children.

We, all of us, are companions entering the room that reveals new life this Easter. Some know the story. Others do not. We will stand together with dignity as witnesses to the Merciful One. May we be given the strength and the grace to say, to shout through tears and gritted teeth, peace and hope, and yes, joy, “Christ is risen. He is risen indeed. Hallelujah!” And we pray that if we are not given that strength, Jesus would please be our companion and hold us close to his healing heart.

Merciful and mighty God, you call us in all things to mirror your peace, justice, and mercy. Hear our prayer for our communities, for all your precious people who stand in need of wisdom, protection, comfort, strength, and courage. Protect your dear children who can be lost in our confusion. Give us all a desire to live your gift of strong and resilient peace in this complicated and uncertain time. As we are companions to others, be our companion and our guide. Amen.

Written by Pastor Nathan Tuff, Lead Pastor at Olivet Lutheran Church, Sylvania Ohio & Cherish All Children Advisory Board Member.

Watch a Sunday recording of Monica Jones, Cherish All Children Youth trainer and Pastor John Klawiter, Faith Lutheran, Forest Lake, MN as an example of companionship. Watch here: https://youtu.be/o_sKrWf4YE