

Daily Reflection
From
Pastor Mark



Saturday
March 21, 2020

All of the links to the worship services mentioned in this Reflection are also available on the new “Hope For Niagara” Website

WWW.HopeForNiagara.org

Going forward you will be able to find all these reflections on line, download them and share them easily at the website. Social media for the site will be up and running soon as well.

Worship is Apparently Good For Your Health: And Now You Actually Have The Time!

It has been a long week and interesting week, that's for sure. I expect that for most of us one of the very most exhausting things has been the constant barrage of news and information about the COVID-19 pandemic. It is definitely time for a break—a temporary boycott of the news.

Now don't get me wrong, I am a firm believer in staying informed about what is happening in the world. It is important to know about our local community and the bigger picture that is out there in the world. When we live with our heads in the sand, it is never good. But we do need to take a break now and then. Regularly in fact. It's healthy to do that.

Genesis 2:2-3

² By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. ³ Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

In the book of Genesis, we are told that God needed a rest after creating ... well, everything! I mean after creating and entire universe having a day off seems pretty reasonable. Sometimes I need a break after all the

effort to rally myself to just get out of bed in the morning! So, yea, a day of rest for making a universe, I'm good with that.

Seriously though, that rest is important for us. There was a study done at Vanderbilt University about people who go to church. "People who attend worship services," the study said "may reduce their mortality risk by 55 percent — especially those between the ages of 40 and 65."

It is apparently related to the reduction of stress. Taking it off the hook, for even just an hour a week, can make a difference it seems. The benefit of worship is that it is not just stress reduction, but that it gets us outside of ourselves, focused on something greater than ourselves, and more aware of those around us.

Now I know that most churches are not offering services this weekend, but there are lots of online options that you can take advantage of. Here are just a few:

Our Lady of Czestochowa Church, NT
Livestream feed: <https://nt-olc.org/live-stream/>
Saturday: 4:00 pm, Sunday: 8:30 am and 10:30 am,
Monday-Friday: 8 am

The Diocese of Buffalo has a list of streaming services on their website at www.buffalodiocese.org/livestreams

First Baptist Church, Niagara Falls:
<https://www.facebook.com/FirstBaptistChurchNiagaraFalls/>
Sunday Worship Video will be live on Facebook 11:00 AM on Sundays and posted afterwards.

True Bethel Church in Buffalo, livestream
<https://www.truebethel.com/907-streaming>
On Sundays it starts at 9:45 AM

Frist Presbyterian Church in Youngstown,
<https://www.facebook.com/youngstownpres/>
Monday- Friday at 12 noon they offer short devotions for meditation, prayer, and song. Sunday worship is livestreamed at 10:00 AM then posted.

St James United Methodist Church, Niagara Falls will be posting services on Sunday morning on Youtube and Facebook. Links are on their website home page www.stjamesniagara.org

The Episcopal National Cathedral in Washington DC has morning and evening prayer Monday-Saturday at 7 AM & 7 PM, and Sunday worship at 11:15 AM. You can watch all of those live on Facebook. All the links are at their website <https://cathedral.org/worship/>

As I said, these are just a few of the possibilities. And I guess that brings me to the main thing I want to share with you.

This is actually kind of a rare moment. The scramble of life out in the world has been forced to stop. We actually have a chance to take a breath.

This is a moment where some may actually have time, for the first time in a long time, on a Sunday Morning, to take in a worship service. If that is you, I hope you will take the opportunity to do that. It is a small blessing in the midst of a sea of trouble. But all blessings, no matter how large or small, are welcome right about now.

Pastor Mark

A Post Script:

I have provide just a few online options for worship and spiritual development in this Reflection. There are *Countless* online services and activities on line. For instance on the Episcopal National Cathedral Facebook page, under events, there are a bunch of opportunities listed. Just look around. You have some time on your hands. Use it wisely.