

At Home Packet

Second Sunday of Easter

Welcome to St. Mark's At Home! This packet is our effort to help you bring worship and spiritual formation into your home. It is a menu to choose from, not an outline to follow from beginning to end. This is offered as a gift, with no strings or expectations, and not meant to be a burden.

What' Inside

- Gathering: Suggestions for Virtual Worship
- Suggestions for your Table
- Youth and Children
- Music and Arts



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on Instagram and Facebook @stmarksaustin

Gathering (Suggestions On Preparing for Virtual Worship)

Set up a particular space in your home for worship and prayer. Light a candle, set out a cross or icon or something similar to help you focus; set your phone on Do Not Disturb, wash your hands. Take a few deep breaths and say a short prayer to prepare your heart to “enter” a different kind of space. We recommend the Collect for Purity:

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayers and Suggestions for Your Table

The season of Easter is a time of abundance and celebration. What might that mean for your household table? At church, we leave the lilies set at the altar for several weeks. What do you have in your house that could live on your household altar / table for the remainder of season in Easter? What special meals might you prepare? What bottle that you have been saving might you open? Is there a candle you have waited to burn?

A prayer before Dinner:

Almighty and everlasting God, who in the Paschal mystery established the new covenant of reconciliation: Grant that all who have been reborn into the fellowship of Christ's Body may show forth in their lives what they profess by their faith; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.



Resources for Children and Youth

It is important for your children and youth to know that the celebration of Easter is not over! The season of Eastertide lasts for seven weeks. Each Sunday, try to set aside some time to do something special together and keep the celebration going. This week, how about baking something sweet as a family? Make sure everyone has a job to do. Talk about how Eastertide is a season for feasting and celebration.

Remember to check out our [Children's Resources](#) page to view this week's Godly Play and StoryMakers videos, or to access lessons from previous weeks.

YOUTH

- Sunday nights, 8pm: Zoom check-in and prayer:

[https://zoom.us/j/655860629?
pwd=Tm00dks4cC9QSTZYV1NybGtKdWZ1UT09](https://zoom.us/j/655860629?pwd=Tm00dks4cC9QSTZYV1NybGtKdWZ1UT09)

Music and the Arts

MUSIC

A Simple Song

We live in a glorious age for music—with just a few taps on our devices we can hear performances of songs first sung 1,000 years ago and pieces first played today. It's never been easier to share and listen to tunes from around the world. No one would have appreciated this more than American conductor, composer, and teacher Leonard Bernstein (1918–1990). Bernstein excelled at conducting the New York Philharmonic in performances of the great orchestral repertoire, his classical compositions were highly acclaimed, he had tremendous success on Broadway (*West Side Story*) and in Hollywood, and he was the first conductor to speak about music on television. Bernstein collaborated with all kinds of musicians, and never stopped exploring new music and new musicians.

Bernstein also would have known that sometimes, in the midst of all this music, we need to pause to remember why we sing. He celebrated artistic complexity, but knew that sometimes a *simple song* is best for the soul. His massive musical theater production *Mass* (1971) opens with a cacophony of ever-more-complex sacred songs. In the midst of this confusion, the Celebrant brings a voice of clarity, summoning us to a *new song*.

On Sunday morning we will hear soprano Christa Tumlinson sing “A Simple Song” from *Mass*. Composer and critic Daron Hagen writes that “A Simple Song” functions... “in the way Bernstein himself did, on several levels at once, a semiotician’s dream: entertaining and illuminating, clever and heartfelt, knowledgeable, but filled with disarming wonder, revealing the obvious without embarrassment or cynicism because the most important things bear repeating.”

*Sing God a simple song. Make it up as you go along. Sing like you like to sing
God loves all simple things. For God is the simplest of all.*

We offer it this Sunday as an Eastertide reminder that sometimes we encounter God’s presence in new, unexpected, and surprisingly *simple* ways.

Listen to the opening of Bernstein’s Mass:
<https://youtu.be/9tjsKzhpSwE?t=488>

Music and the Arts

ART

Spend some time meditating on the image on the following page. Begin by listing all the things you notice. Don't rush to interpretation.



Incredulity of Saint Thomas, by Caravaggio.

Only after you have spent some time listing, begin asking yourself questions like the following:

- Why did the artist decide to make the image this way instead of that way? Why did they include this detail instead of that one? In what ways is the artist telling this story in a new way than I've heard before? Who might all the characters in the image be? Who or what is missing from this image?
- Finally: What might God be inviting me to consider through this image?