

[Isaiah 25:6-9](#)

[Psalm 24](#)

[John 11:32-44](#)

Almighty God, you have knit together your elect in one communion and fellowship in the mystical body of your Son Christ our Lord: Give us grace so to follow your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those ineffable joys that you have prepared for those who truly love you; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. *Amen.*

O blest Communion, fellowship divine!
We feebly struggle, they in glory shine
Yet all are one in Thee, for all are thine.¹
Let it be so!
Amen.

Do you remember the childhood game of Red light Green Light?
The game has one person who stands as the “stoplight” and when their back is turned the light is green and you can move as fast as you can to get to tag the “stoplight.” Of course, the person who is the stoplight can turn towards you at any time and when they do, it is RED LIGHT and you must freeze. And if you move erroneously, you are dismissed from the game. The game continues until the person who is the stoplight is finally tagged, usually not without several quick turn arounds and bending so that the nearest person cannot possibly tag them.
And of course, the words “red light” and “green light” must be said at the loudest volume possible.

The game gives the illusion that you can stop time,
freeze people in their tracks
and
prevent something from happening.

Having watched stoplights here in Boston and people running redlights like they don't exist, I am not under the illusion that the solution to the world's problems would be if we could control time.

And yet, as people of faith we live in space where we are able to stop.
When we enter into this space we seek sanctuary, space to pause and lean into God's time, Kairos verses Chronos (the sort of time that our clocks track). We remember backwards and think forward together. We aren't quite time travelers and yet we live in this holy “in the midst” of the communion of saints that have been and the saints here and now and those to come.

In the past three weeks you have heard my colleagues preach about the lives of the faithful. Two weeks ago, Morgan spoke about how we will live through this election season as people of faith and the need to work together after the election is complete. Last week, we heard of the beauty and hope that we have in the liturgies we pray daily and weekly as we hold those who are dear to us who have died. That lovely Book of Common Prayer that we hold and pray together in common transforms and changes us, assisting us in learning more about the grace and love of God that binds

us together, that connects us when everything else seems to have been lost and divisions seem more prevalent than union.

For we live in a world where we need stoplights, places to stop- reflect, look around, hold all of our emotions, joys and sorrows, frustrations and ineffable joys, so that we can move forward.

Today's gospel is Mary and Martha and Jesus, again. This is the same Mary and Martha who had the competitive "who is the better disciple" redlight greenlight game going on when Jesus was in their house. A bit of a "Who can get closer to Jesus and be the best" competition and Jesus says "stop" to them then---

Today, though, today, They aren't competing to be the best disciple, their competitive aspirations are replaced with grief. Mary and Martha both stop Jesus in his tracks, they stop him and demand answers.

RED LIGHT Their actions and words shout to Jesus.

They demand that he hear and see both their faith and their grief.

And Jesus stops.

The Son of Man and Son of God halts in his tracks.

Listen to those words again, when hearing that his friend and their brother has died, he is "greatly disturbed and deeply moved." He has the same compassion he has when the multitudes are hungry, he is not numb to their emotions.

He stops.

He weeps.

He is with them.

AND

He moves.

In the midst of this red light given by Mary and Martha, both in their own ways, Jesus reminds them that there is still a path forward.

In the midst of the grief, there is life- "changed not ended" as we were reminded last week with our requiem services.....

Now, I am not sure how Lazarus felt about being brought back to life to live with his sisters again. I have two brothers and my sister and I, while not named Mary and Martha, are pretty competitive—I could imagine that my brothers might be ready for a break from us.... You know, "For all the saints who from their labors rest"² and all.... but that is **not** the point, the point, here, that Jesus gives us, is that Lazarus is restored to life.

In the midst of this story of grief, and when the path might seem ended completely, Jesus reminds all that there is a way forward, the impossible is possible despite all odds.

Life is given.

"Open the tomb, unbind him." Jesus says.

Jesus' words remind us that we are agents in this world. We are involved in the new chapter, the directions have been given, we are engaged, and commanded to be a part of this new thing.

Today we celebrate new chapters in 5 beloved children of God's lives. We will baptize them into the household of God and at the same time renew our own baptismal covenant. We don't just watch and say "good luck folks," and send them out on their own. Rather, we promise to walk with them, support them, cry and laugh with them (and their parents and godparents). We will make those promises again with the response "I will with God's help." We will break bread together and we, too will be given the green light to go back out into the world to "go in peace to love and serve the Lord."

We, too are engaged in this holy work of living out our faith, those promises made at baptism, in our schools, our workplaces, our lives as elections unfold—because we too, know that there is a way forward together- seeing each other fully, feeling deeply with one another and moving forward "with God's help" so that we might live into our identities as citizens in the kingdom of God, building up our community to respect the dignity of every human being.

Grounded in God's Love which is what we hold in Common, may we remember all the saints this day- the past, the present, and the ones to come as we too look to earth's wide bounds, from ocean's farthest coast and praise Father Son and Holy Ghost.³

¹ For All The Saints verse 3 https://hymnary.org/text/for_all_the_saints_who_from_their_labors

² For all the Saints verse 1 https://hymnary.org/text/for_all_the_saints_who_from_their_labors - why do them in order, that is silly! ☺

³ For all the Saints verse 6 https://hymnary.org/text/for_all_the_saints_who_from_their_labors