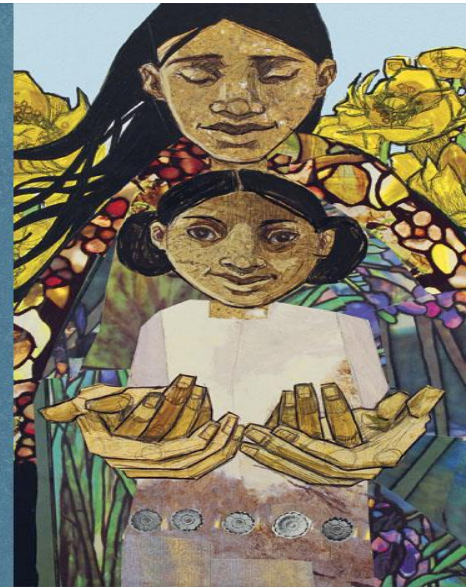


Abide in my love

JOHN 15:9



Sunday, May 5, 2024 Sixth Sunday of Easter

This Sunday's image of the life the risen Christ shares with us is the image of friendship. We are called to serve others as Jesus came to serve; but for John's gospel, the image of servanthood is too hierarchical, too distant, to capture the essence of life with Christ. Friendship captures the love, the joy, the deep mutuality of the relationship into which Christ invites us. The Greeks believed that true friends are willing to die for each other. This is the mutual love of Christian community commanded by Christ and enabled by the Spirit.

GATHERING

RESURRECTION PROCLAMATION

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

(Please stand as you are able)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, the life beyond all death, the joy beyond all sorrow, our everlasting home.

Amen.

Rejoicing in Christ's victory over sin and death, let us come before God who calls us to repentance.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God of life,

by the resurrection of your Son you make everything new. Newness scares us, and we confess to shutting our doors in fear. We have not listened to voices that challenge us. We have resisted the Holy Spirit moving us in new directions. Our hearts are slow to believe your promises. Forgive us, O God, and renew us to embrace without fear the new life you have given us in Jesus Christ. Amen.

People of God: Christ is alive, and death has lost its power. Through the waters of baptism you have been born anew by the living word of God. Know that your sins are forgiven in + Jesus' name and that the Spirit of the risen Christ is alive in you both now and forever.

Amen.

OPENING SONG ELW 482 vs. 1,4,5 *I Come with Joy*

- 1 I come with joy, a child of God,
forgiven, loved, and free,
the life of Jesus to recall
in love laid down for me,
in love laid down for me.
- 4 The Spirit of the risen Christ,
unseen, but ever near,
is in such friendship better known,
alive among us here,
alive among us here.
- 5 Together met, together bound
by all that God has done,
we'll go with joy, to give the world
the love that makes us one,
the love that makes us one.

Text: Brian A. Wren, b. 1936

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GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

CANTICLE OF PRAISE *Majesty*

Majesty, worship his majesty,
Unto Jesus be all glory, honor, and praise.
Majesty, kingdom authority
Flow from his throne unto His own;
His anthem raise.
So exalt, lift up on high the names of Jesus.
Magnify, come glorify Christ Jesus, the King.
Majesty, worship his majesty
Jesus who died, now glorified, King of all kings.

Text: Kevin Mayhew

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God, you have prepared for those who love you joys beyond understanding.

Pour into our hearts such love for you that, loving you above all things, we may obtain your promises, which exceed all we can desire; through Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

(Please be seated)

WORD

SPECIAL MUSIC

First Reading: Acts 10:44-48

Jesus' death on our behalf is the clearest demonstration of divine love. This is the very love we share with others, not just through our words but especially through our deeds. In sharing such love we fulfill God's commandments.

⁴⁴While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word. ⁴⁵The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles, ⁴⁶for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter said, ⁴⁷“Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?” ⁴⁸So he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they invited him to stay for several days.

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

(Please stand as you are able)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION *Alleluia*

Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.

Text: Evangelical Lutheran Worship

Gospel: John 15:9-17

On the night of his arrest, Jesus delivers a final testimony to his disciples to help them in the days ahead. Here, he repeats the most important of all his commands, that they love one another.

[Jesus said:] ⁹“As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. ¹⁰If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. ¹¹I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

¹²“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. ¹⁴You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. ¹⁶You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. ¹⁷I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

(Please be seated)

Music: Jesus Loves Me – ELW #595

CHILDREN’S SERMON

Music: Lord, Listen to your Children Praying – ELW #752

SERMON

SONG OF THE DAY ELW #367 vs.1, 4 *Now All the Vault of Heaven Resounds*

- 1 Now all the vault of heav'n resounds
in praise of love that still abounds:
"Christ has triumphed! He is living!"
Sing, choirs of angels, loud and clear!
Repeat their song of glory here:
"Christ has triumphed! He is living!"
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
- 4 Adoring praises now we bring
and with the heav'nly blessed sing:
"Christ has triumphed! Alleluia!"
Be to the Father, and our Lord,
to Spirit blest, most holy God,
all the glory, never ending!

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Text: Paul Z. Strodach, 1876-1947, alt.

Text © 1958 *Service Book and Hymnal*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

(Please stand as you are able)

Let us confess our faith in the words of the

NICENE CREED

We believe in one God,

**the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,

**the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,

was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human.

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,

**who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Rejoicing that Jesus is risen and love has triumphed over fear, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need of good news.

A brief silence.

Your Holy Spirit falls upon all who hear the word. Fill your church with the gifts of your Spirit and give understanding hearts to those who strengthen our commitments with our ecumenical and interreligious partners. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

You speak and the face of the earth is renewed. Revive your creation, that habitats and every kind of living thing might flourish. Protect endangered species and help us to care for all your creatures. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Your world is divided and the nations rage. Grant wisdom and vision to world leaders, that they may seek justice, peace, and the good of all. Strengthen international partnerships and cooperation. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Your children are in need. Comfort all those who suffer, especially those afflicted by anxiety, depression, and mental illness. Help us to be conduits of your love in our care for one another. (*We pray especially for . . .*)

God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Your work is done in this place with our hands. Bless the ministries of this congregation (*ministries may be named*), that we may embody your love for the world. Inspire those who plan and lead worship, council members, committee members, and volunteers. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Accept our thanksgiving for the people you surround us with, especially for those who celebrate their lives and birth this week:

Carl Rumsey

Connie Hoffman

enrich them with a sense of joy and grace for yet another year. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Save us from ourselves, from racism in all its hidden forms, from hollow words without actions, forgive us, renew us, call us to action God of grace,

hear our prayer.

For those fighting cancer and other serious illnesses, grant strength and grace. We pray for doctors, nurses, technicians, researchers and all who work toward treatments and cures. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

For police officers and firefighters, for peacekeepers and military personnel, and for the leaders of governments, that they provide protection to all people, especially the most vulnerable. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

For your people in the midst of war, civil unrest, or conflict, grant protection, strength and hope for a better tomorrow. Bring peace and an end to the conflict. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

For Vicar Tom Helmich this year, may your Spirit surround him with all that is needful and joy-filled. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Your blessed saints now rest in you. Give us thankful hearts for those who have gone before us (*especially Pastor Karen*). At the last, bring us all together around your heavenly banquet table. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Into your hands, most merciful God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your abiding love; through Jesus Christ, our resurrected and living Lord.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

Let us share the Lord's Peace with one another...

(Please be seated)

MEAL

OFFERING

The Worship/Communion Registration Card may be placed in the offering plate as it is passed.

Thank you for your support of our ministry.

(Please stand as you are able)

OFFERTORY ELW #186 *Create In Me a Clean Heart*

Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from your presence,

and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and uphold me with your free Spirit.

Text: Lutheran Book of Worship

OFFERING PRAYER

Holy God, gracious and merciful, you bring forth food from the earth and nourish your whole creation.

Turn our hearts toward those who hunger in any way, that all may know your care; and prepare us now to feast on the bread of life, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy.....

concludingwe praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Music: *Holy, Holy, Holy* – **ELW #190**

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of pow'r and might,
holy, holy, holy Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heaven and earth are full, full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest.

PRAYER AT THE TABLE

Let us pray together the prayer our Lord taught us:

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen

(Please be seated)

COMMUNION

The presiding minister invites the assembly

Come to the banquet for all is now ready. All are welcome.

When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say:

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

COMMUNION SONG *Lamb of God*

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

Text: Evangelical Lutheran Worship

COMMUNION BLESSING

(Please stand as you are able)

POST COMMUNION CANTICLE ELW #207 *Thankful Hearts and Voices*

Thankful hearts and voices raise;

tell ev'ryone what God has done.

Let ev'ryone who seeks the Lord rejoice

and bear the name of Christ.

Send us with your promises

and lead your people forth in joy

with shouts of thanksgiving. Alleluia, alleluia.

Text: John W. Arthur, 1922-1980

Text © 1978, 1995 Augsburg Fortress.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

We give you thanks almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life. In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

SENDING

(Please be seated)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

May the Lord bless you and keep you,

may the Lord smile upon you and be gracious to you,

may the Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace. + Amen.

SENDING SONG ELW 836 vs 1 *Joyful Joyful We Adore Thee*

1 Joyful, joyful we adore thee,

God of glory, Lord of love!

Hearts unfold like flow'rs before thee,

praising thee, their sun above.

Melt the clouds of sin and sadness,

drive the gloom of doubt away.

Giver of immortal gladness,

fill us with the light of day.

Text: Henry van Dyke, 1852-1922

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Risen One. Alleluia!

Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!!

ADDITIONAL READINGS FOR THE DAY

Psalm 98

1 John 5:1-6

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS FOR

May 12, 2024

Seventh Sunday of Easter

Acts 1:15-17, 21-26

Matthias added to the apostles

Psalm 1

The LORD knows the way of the righteous. (*Ps. 1:6*)

1 John 5:9-13

Life in the Son of God

John 17:6-19

Christ's prayer for his disciples

GOSPEL MESSAGE

May 5, 2024

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

The Unconditional Love of Disciple-Friends

Friend requests are a common feature of Facebook and similar digital platforms. When it comes to social media, “friends” are just a click away. But there is no automatic guarantee of accountability, warmth, relationship, or true belonging in a virtual community. In stark contrast, Jesus invites the disciples to become part of a community where selfless, sacrificial, unconditional *agape* love is the core criterion. The kingdom, or “kingdom,” of God is present wherever God’s people are affirmed as children of God and siblings in Christ. But Jesus gives his disciples an additional identity: that of “friends.”

In the new status Jesus confers on his disciples, the single most important criterion is love, including the readiness to lay down one’s life for another. Jesus has just taught this lesson by example when he washed the feet of his disciples, including Judas Iscariot. The new commandment to love one another as Jesus loved us summarizes the whole of the gospel mandate. It is not an easy commandment by any human standards, but it is possible because Jesus himself showed us the way and forgives us when we fall short. The status of “disciple-friends” is not a request for the church, but a faith mandate.

How can we live as disciple-friends of Jesus in this world? When we believe, trust, obey, and follow the word, and the new commandment Jesus gave his disciples, a real new community is born. When we learn to embrace the other—those who are marginalized and “othered”—we partner with God in enabling the image of God to blossom to its fullest.

From sundaysandseasons.com.

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