

Sunday, May 6, 2018
Sixth Sunday of Easter

INTRODUCTION

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.

PRELUDE

"When In Our Music God Is Glorified"

Robert Hobby

*GATHERING SONG

"To God Be the Glory"

ELW 879

To God be the glory, great things he has done;
so loved he the world that he gave us his Son,
who yielded his life an atonement for sin,
and opened the life gate that all may go in.

Refrain

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the earth hear his voice!
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the people rejoice!
Oh, come to the Father, through Jesus the Son,
and give him the glory, great things he has done.

Oh, perfect redemption, the purchase of blood,
to ev'ry believer the promise of God;
the vilest offender by grace may believe,
that moment from Jesus a pardon receive. *Refrain*

Great things he has taught us, great things he has done,
and great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son;
but purer, and higher, and greater will be
our wonder, our vict'ry, when Jesus we see. *Refrain*

*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

"Gloria"

pg. 176

Gloria, gloria, gloria, glory to God on high!
Gloria, gloria, gloria, glory to God on high!

**And on earth peace to God's people. Glory to God.
And on earth peace to God's people. Glory to God.**

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P *O God,*

G **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!**

ANTHEM

“A Welcome Place”

Joel Raney

Chancel Choir

FIRST READING

Acts 10:44-48

While Peter shares the good news of Jesus with a Gentile soldier and his family, the Holy Spirit comes upon them. Recognizing that the Spirit works inclusively in the lives of both Jews and Gentiles, Peter commands that these Gentiles also be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

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.

Reflection

This text is the climax of the story of Peter’s visit (at the Spirit’s urging) with Cornelius and his household. To read the story of what leads up to this, read all of Acts 10. What was the Holy Spirit’s action through the words of Peter’s preaching? (verse 44) What was the reaction of the Jewish (circumcised) believers who had come with Peter? (verse 45) What did Peter direct the believers to do? (verses 47-48) In many ways, the history of the church has been the question of who can believe and be baptized and be part of the church. Gentiles? Those Germanic hordes? Non-Europeans? Slaves? Native peoples? Men with more than one wife? (Not very often women with more than one husband at a time.) People who do not share our culture? Who do we have questions about, whether they belong with us or not? What does the Holy Spirit say?

PSALM 98

¹Sing a new song to the LORD, who has done | marvelous things,
whose right hand and holy arm have | won the victory.

²**O LORD, you have made | known your victory,
you have revealed your righteousness in the sight | of the nations.**

³You remember your steadfast love and faithfulness to the | house of Israel;

all the ends of the earth have seen the victory | of our God.

**⁴Shout with joy to the LORD, | all you lands;
lift up your voice, re- | jice, and sing.**

⁵Sing to the LORD | with the harp,
with the harp and the | voice of song.

**⁶With trumpets and the sound | of the horn
shout with joy before the | king, the LORD.**

⁷Let the sea roar, and | all that fills it,
the world and those who | dwell therein.

**⁸Let the rivers | clap their hands,
and let the hills ring out with joy before the LORD, who comes to | judge the earth.**

⁹The LORD will judge the | world with righteousness
and the peo- | ples with equity.

Reflection

Why does the psalmist urge us to praise God? How does the psalmist urge us to praise God? Who is left out of the command to praise God? (verses 2-4) Who else praises God? (verses 7-8) What is the Lord's judgment of the world and its people? (verse 9) What ways will you think of to praise God this week?

SECOND READING

1 John 5:1-6

God's children believe that Jesus is the Messiah and love God by keeping God's commandments. Thus the world is conquered not through military might but through love and faith.

¹Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the parent loves the child. ²By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. ³For the love of God is this, that we obey his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome, ⁴for whatever is born of God conquers the world. And this is the victory that conquers the world, our faith. ⁵Who is it that conquers the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

⁶This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ, not with the water only but with the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one that testifies, for the Spirit is the truth.

Reflection

What does it mean to be born of God? (verse 1) What do we do when we love God? How do we show our love for God? (verses 2-3) There are times when we feel that we can't obey God's commandments. What is the writer's answer to that complaint? (verse 4) What is the reason for God's commandments? (verses 3-5) People (non-believers) often speak as though obeying God is burdensome. When have you experienced the burdens of life, when you have been "in tune" with God's love, or when you have rebelled against it? Think of a time when loving and obeying God brought a sense of joy and meaning to you. If you can't think of such a time yourself, talk to someone who is more mature in faith than you are, and ask them what it means to them to love God.

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

pg. 179

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
Alleluia, alleluia,
alleluia! Alleluia!

***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.”

Reflection

How does Jesus describe the love he has for his disciples (that means us!)? (verse 9) This text continues the thought from the 1 John text about obeying God’s commandments. How does Jesus define obeying God’s commandments? (verse 10) Sometimes we think of obedience to God as something imposed on us. This text invites us to imagine obedience as dwelling in the household of God, rather than in the hovel of poverty of love. What does Jesus say will happen to us when we follow what he says? (verse 11) What does Jesus command us? (verse 12) What is the difference between life as friends with someone and life as servants of someone? When we serve Jesus and his friends, what do we become? (verses 14-15) Have you ever wanted to become friends with someone, but did not feel welcomed by them? How do we become friends with Jesus? (verse 16) As you reflect on this text this week, think about Jesus befriending us so that we may love one another. If we love one another, what kind of fruit will we bear?

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

Kris Langdon

MISSION MOMENT

“Food 4 Kids”

Sheila Gilbert

SERMON

“Emptied for Welcoming”

Rev. Roger Lenander

Come! Live in the light!
Shine with the joy and the love of the Lord!
We are called to be light for the kingdom,
to live in the freedom of the city of God.

Refrain

We are called to act with justice,
we are called to love tenderly;
we are called to serve one another,
to walk humbly with God.

Come! Open your heart!
Show your mercy to all those in fear!
We are called to be hope for the hopeless
so hatred and blindness will be no more. *Refrain*

Sing! Sing a new song!
Sing of that great day when all will be one!
God will reign, and we'll walk with each other
as sisters and brothers united in love. *Refrain*

***APOSTLES' CREED**

- ☑ I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
- I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
- I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen!

What a friend we have in Jesus,
all our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry
ev'rything to God in prayer!
Oh, what peace we often forfeit;
oh, what needless pain we bear--
all because we do not carry
ev'rything to God in prayer!

Prayers of Intercession

Rejoicing in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we pray for the witness of the church, the wholeness of creation, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

Holy God, your voice calls us to worship. Where discord bellows within the church, unite us in harmony. Where we lack direction, guide us in singing your song with our unique voices. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Creative Lord, your melodies formed the earth and all that is in it. Receive the roar of the sea and the rhythmic clap of the rivers. Rejoice as the hills ring out in praise. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Holy One, you hear all our moans and groans. Where lament and the blues resound, send us to listen. Send us to comfort. Send us to build relationships rooted in your justice and peace. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Serenade the estranged and all who suffer alone. Accompany high-functioning addicts and the frightened who have no one to turn to. Give rest to overworked caregivers and people living with schizophrenia. Today we pray for the sick: *especially Dorothy, Mary Anna, Kay*, and for those we name before you aloud or silently in our hearts (pause for 10 seconds). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Eternal Song, you call us to share our gifts for your glory. We thank you and praise you for our musicians and vocalists, choir directors and hymnwriters. Bless all who lead and all who sing in worship. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Your goodness echoes through all time with the songs of the saints. Thank you for all the disciples who have mentored us through their gift of music. Keep your song within us this day and always. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We entrust all our prayers to you, gracious God. Receive them by the power of the Holy Spirit and the love of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen!

***SHARING OF THE PEACE**

P *The peace of Christ be with you always.*

G **And also with you!**

OFFERTORY

“Oh, Sing to the Lord” vs 1, 2, & 5

ELW 822

Oh, sing to the Lord, oh, sing God a new song.

Oh, sing to the Lord, oh, sing God a new song.

Oh, sing to the Lord, oh, sing God a new song.

Oh, sing to our God, oh, sing to our God.

For God is the Lord, and God has done wonders.

For God is the Lord, and God has done wonders.

For God is the Lord, and God has done wonders.

Oh, sing to our God, oh, sing to our God.

For Jesus is Lord! Amen! Alleluia!

For Jesus is Lord! Amen! Alleluia!

For Jesus is Lord! Amen! Alleluia!

Oh, sing to our God, oh, sing to our God.

***OFFERTORY RESPONSE**

“Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love”

ELW 708

Jesu, Jesu,

fill us with your love,

show us how to serve

the neighbors we have from you.

***OFFERING PRAYER**

P *Be known to us, O Lord,*

G **in the breaking of the bread, as you were made known to the disciples. Receive these gifts, and the offering of our lives, that we may be your risen body in the world.**

Amen!

***DIALOGUE**

P *The Lord be with you.*

G **And also with you.**

P *Lift up your hearts.*

G **We lift them to the Lord.**

P *Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.*

G **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

***PREFACE**

P *It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
for the glorious resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ,
the true Paschal Lamb who gave himself to take away our sin;
who in dying has destroyed death,
and in rising has brought us to eternal life.
And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter and all the witnesses of the resurrection,
with earth and sea and all their creatures,
and with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:*

***HOLY, HOLY, HOLY**

pg. 181

**Holy, holy, holy Lord God,
God of might and power; holy is the Lord.
Holy, holy, holy Lord God,
God of might and power; holy is the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest, hosanna here on earth.
Blest is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest, hosanna here on earth.
Blest is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

***THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

P *In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.
Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.
With this bread and cup we remember our Lord's passover from death to life
as we proclaim the mystery of faith:*

C **Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.**

***LORD'S PRAYER**

P *Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.*

C **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!

***INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

P *Now let us feast on Christ, the bread of heaven. Hallelujah!*

***BLESSING**

P *The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.*

G **Amen!**

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

P *Life-giving God,*

G **in the mystery of Christ's death and resurrection you send light to conquer darkness, water to give new life, and the bread of heaven to nourish your people. Send us forth as witnesses to Jesus' resurrection that we may show your glory to all the world; through the same Jesus Christ, our risen Lord. Amen!**

***BENEDICTION**

P *May God who has brought us from death to life fill you with great joy.*

Almighty God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

G **Amen!**

***SENDING SONG**

"The Church Song"

Refrain

**We are the church,
the body of our Lord;
we are all God's children,
we have been restored.**

The church is not a building
where people go to pray;
it's not made out of stick and stones,
it's not made out of clay. *Refrain*

You can go to worship
but you cannot go to Church;
you can't find a building that's alive
no matter how you search. *Refrain*

The church is not a business,
a committee or a board;
it's not a corporation for
the business of the Lord. *Refrain*

The church it is the people,
living out their lives
called, enlightened, sanctified
for the work of Jesus Christ. *Refrain*

***DISMISSAL**

P *Alleluia! Christ is risen.*

C **Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

P *You are the body of Christ raised up for the world.
Go in peace. Share the good news.*

C **Thanks be to God!**