

Sunday, May 9, 2021

Sixth Sunday of Easter, Year B

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.

Order of Service

This Sunday we continue our celebration of Easter with a non-communion service. Pastor Peterman preaches and presides at worship. We mark Mothers' Day with *Giving in Service's* carnations with the donations raised going to Laurel House (donation list goes as an insert in the bulletin).

Invocation

We begin in the name of the Eternal God,
Father and Mother of us all,
Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer.
Amen.

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.

Readings

[Acts 10:44-48](#)

The Spirit poured out on the Gentiles

[John 15:9-17](#)

Christ the friend and lover

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.

A The Word of the Lord.

C THANKS BE TO GOD.

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.”

Prayers of Intercession

When I say, “Hear us, O God,” you respond, “**Your mercy is great.**”

Alive in the risen Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, we bring our prayers before God who promises to hear us and answer in steadfast love.

A brief silence is kept as we gather our prayers.

Eternal God, you call forth leaders for your Church in this and every generation. We thank you for leading Grace in this season of our life, for a transition process that has turned us again toward life, health, and growth, and for the work of Pastor Janet Peterman in our midst. *pause* We thank you for the successful completion of the call process, for the call of our new Pastor, and for the doors that you, O God, are opening before us now. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Loving God, we pause to thank you for all in Grace who have carried leadership over the last two+ years, for the sake of the Church: For Council; for the Transition Leadership Team; and for the Call Committee; for ministries across the congregation and out into the community, that Grace might be a church that bears fruit that abides, we thank you, O LORD God:

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Creating God, the earth praises you. The seas roar and the hills sing for joy. Fill the earth with your love so that by their song, all creatures of land and sea and sky, burrowing and soaring, may call us to join with them in praise.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Faithful Savior, you conquer the world not with weapons but with undying love. Plant your word in the hearts of the nations' leaders and give them your Spirit, so that the peoples of the world may live in peace.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Caring Healer, you forget no one and accompany the lonely. Be present with those who are sick or suffering. We remember Sue Wieland whose long-awaited surgery is finally scheduled soon, and those who still struggle with isolation as the world begins to open up. Provide for whose needs are still overwhelming *pause* whether for housing, or medical care, or other basic needs.

Be with the dying and the grieving.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Gracious God, as a mother comforts her child, you comfort us. Bless mothers, grandmothers, godmothers, aunts and others who have been like a mother to us. Comfort those who miss their mothers, mothers who grieve, those who grieve because they cannot be mothers, and those who have never known a loving mother.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

O God,

receive the gifts of our offerings as you receive us:
like a mother receives her child, with arms open wide.

Nourish us anew in your tender care,
and empower us in faithful service
to tend to others with this same love,
through Jesus Christ, our saving grace.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Gentle Redeemer, all who die in you abide in your presence forever. We remember with thanksgiving those who shared your love throughout their lives. Keep us united with them in your lasting love.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

In the hope of new life in Christ, we raise our prayers to you, trusting in your never-ending goodness and mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Blessing

May our glorious God grant you a spirit of wisdom
to know and to love the risen Lord Jesus.

The God of life,

Father, ✝ Son, and Holy Spirit,

bless you now and forever.

Amen.

Dismissal

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!

Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

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