

Sunday, May 9, 2021

Sixth Sunday of Easter

ELW Service of the Word



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.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Refreshed by the resurrection life we share in Christ,
let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

We thank you, risen Christ,
for these waters where you make us new,
leading us from death to life, from tears to joy.

We bless you, risen Christ, that your Spirit comes to us
in the grace-filled waters of rebirth,
like rains to our thirsting earth,
like streams that revive our souls,
like cups of cool water shared with strangers.

Breathe your peace on your church when we hide in fear.
Clothe us with your mercy and forgiveness.
Send us companions on our journey as we share your life.
Make us one, risen Christ.

Cleanse our hearts.
Shower us with life.
To you be given all praise,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God,
now and forever.

Amen.

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.

KYRIE

Lord, have mercy: Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy: Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy: Lord, have mercy.

CANTICLE OF PRAISE

Glory to God in the highest; and peace to God's people on earth.

**Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. 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.**

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Acts 10:44-48

A reading from Acts.

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.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: 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.

⁴**Shout with joy to the Lord, all you lands; lift up your voice, rejoice, and sing.**

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

⁶**With 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.

⁸**Let 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 peoples with equity.

SECOND READING: 1 John 5:1-6

A reading from 1 John.

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.
The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia, alleluia.

GOSPEL: John 15:9-17

The holy gospel according to John. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

[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.**

SERMON

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

Remembering the life of Nicolaus Zinzendorf, we pray on this sixth Sunday of Easter for the Moravian Church, for the baptized around the world, and for all people according to their needs, responding to each petition with the words “fill us with your love.” *A brief silence.*

O triune God, we praise you for your wondrous love, for the witness of Moravian Christians, and for the steadfastness of believers throughout this pandemic. Whenever churches face hardship or challenge, strengthen us in affection within and between denominations.

A brief silence.

Hear us, loving God: **fill us with your love.**

We praise you for the beauty of spring, and we stand in awe of even the hungry cicadas. Wherever creation is beckoning us to lives of ecological restraint, teach us your care of our earth. *A brief silence.*

Hear us, creating God: **fill us with your love.**

We praise you for all efforts to achieve peace throughout the world. Wherever violence prevails, wherever brutality silences protest, wherever prejudice reigns, wherever the rich oppress the poor, lead us and all nations into the ways of justice.

A brief silence.

Hear us, righteous God: **fill us with your love.**

We praise you for the gradual lessening of the pandemic and for your gift of vaccines. Wherever the virus still rages (especially India, Turkey, and South America), wherever medical resources are depleted, wherever medical advice is rejected, extend the power of your healing hand. Be present with all who today will die, and visit all who are sick or suffering, especially . . .

A brief silence.

Hear us, healing God: **fill us with your love.**

We praise you for the loving support of mothers to their children. Bless mothers, stepmothers, foster mothers, godmothers, and all of each gender who give mothering care. Protect mothers in societies where women have few rights. Comfort those who grieve because they cannot mother a child. Wherever children are deprived of mothering, provide responsible and affectionate care.

A brief silence.

Hear us, mothering God: **fill us with your love.**

We praise you for calling yourself our friend. Receive now the petitions of our own hearts.

A longer period of silence.

Hear us, dearest God: **fill us with your love.**

We praise you for the witness of all who have died in the faith, especially for Nicolaus Zinzendorf, the apostle Matthias, and those we name in our hearts. Keep us united with all your children until we join them in your presence forever. *A brief silence.*

Hear us, everlasting God: **fill us with your love.**

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 Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

THANKSGIVING

OFFERING

As forgiven and reconciled people, we offer ourselves and our gifts to God. **Amen**

OFFERING PRAYER

God of love,

you call us beloved children and welcome us to your table.

Receive our lives and the gifts we offer.

Abide with us and send us in service to a suffering world;

for the sake of your beloved Child, Jesus Christ. Amen.

CANTICLE OF THANKSGIVING

Salvation belongs to our God

and to Christ the Lamb forever and ever.

Great and wonderful are your deeds,

O God of the universe; just and true are your ways,

O Ruler of all the nations.

Who can fail to honor you, Lord, and sing the glory of your name?

For you alone are the Holy One,

and blessed is the one whose name is the Word of God.

All praise and thanks to you, holy God!

THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

Praise to you, O God, for your Word of life:

creating a wondrous universe,

proclaiming freedom from captivity,

becoming the song of your people.

We praise you, O God, for your Word.

We praise you, O God, for your Word.

Psalm 92:5

Exodus 5:1

Psalm 118:4

Your Word is made flesh among us:

with Mary in the garden, you call us by name.

With Thomas beholding your wounds, you call us to believe.

With sheep of others folds, we are gathered by your voice.

Your Word names our death and our life:

a seed that falls into the earth and dies,

rain and snow that come down from heaven to water the earth,

a vine in which we abide.

Through your Word, you appoint us to bear fruit, fruit that will last.

We bless you, O God, for your Word.

We bless you, O God, for your Word.

John 20:16

John 20:17

John 10:16

John 5:24

John 12:24

Isaiah 55:10

John 15:5

John 15:16

By your living Word, we are witnesses of these things. Luke 24:48
Breathe into us your Holy Spirit. John 20:22
Open our minds to understand the scriptures. Luke 24:45
Give us wisdom to declare what we have heard,
what we have seen with our eyes,
what we have looked at and touched with our hands
concerning the word of life. 1 John 1:1
Fill us with strength to love, not in word or speech alone,
but in truth and action. 1 John 3:18
With every creature in heaven and on earth
and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them,
we join in the hymn of all creation, as
we thank you, O God, for your life-giving Word. Rev 5:13
We thank you, O God, for your life-giving Word. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ANNIVERSARY PRAYER (Derek and Julie Knight)

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we commend to your care ____ and ____ as they celebrate their wedding anniversary. Knit them together in constant affection for each other. Fill them with faith, virtue, knowledge, patience, and godliness so that their home may be a haven of blessing and peace, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

BLESSING OF MOTHERS

God of all creation,
pour out your blessing on all mothers
and those who provide motherly care.
You have made them in your image
and given them children to love and care for in your name.
Bless them with a heart like your heart:
loving and kind, comforting and strong,
nurturing and grace-filled.
As they participate in your ongoing creativity,
give them discernment
to help their children discover their unique gifts.
As they teach their children,
grant them wisdom to know what is truly valuable.
As they strive to share your unconditional love,
give them long-suffering patience and a lively sense of humor.
As they model your mercy,
help them extend the forgiveness
they themselves freely receive from you.
In all circumstances fortify their faith,
that they may love you above all.
We ask this in Jesus' name.
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!