



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

Pastor Brenda Wicklund

May 9, 2021, Sixth Sunday of Easter

OUR MISSION STATEMENT:

“We are called by God to grow in faith together, sharing Christ’s love with each other and our community”

Augsburg Fortress Hymn License SBT003486/ CCLI-Copyright License # 1961276 & Streaming License #20937714



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

Pat Anderson

Welcome to Worship this morning. We will be sharing Holy Communion, so please make sure you have a Communion packet when you arrive. Please join us as we sing under our masks. Thank you for practicing social distancing and masking.

Confession and Forgiveness

L: Blessed be the holy Trinity, the one who fashions us, the one who heals us, the one who reforms us again and again. **C: Amen.**

L: Let us confess our sin, calling for God’s transforming power.

(Silence for reflection and self-examination)

L: Source of all life,

C: we confess that we have not allowed your grace to set us free. We fear that we are not good enough. We hear your word of love freely given to us, yet we expect others to earn it. We turn the church inward, rather than moving it outward. Forgive us. Stir us. Reform us to be a church powered by love, willing to speak for what is right, act to what is just, and seek the healing of your whole creation. Amen.

L: God hears our cry and sends the Spirit to change us and to empower our lives in the world. Our sins are forgiven, God’s love is unconditional, and we are raised up as God’s people who will always be made new, in the name of Jesus Christ.

C: Amen.

Hymn

“Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee”

Red Worship Book 836

- 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.
- 2 All thy works with joy surround thee, earth and heav’n reflect thy rays, stars and angels sing around thee, center of unbroken praise. Field and forest, vale and mountain, flow’ry meadow, flashing sea, chanting bird, and flowing fountain call us to rejoice in thee.
- 3 Thou art giving and forgiving, ever blessing, ever blest, wellspring of the joy of living, ocean-depth of happy rest! Thou our Father, Christ our brother, all who live in love are thine; teach us how to love each other, lift us to the joy divine!

Greeting

Red Worship Book pg. 147

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

C: And also with you.

Kyrie

Red Worship Book pg. 147-148

L: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

L: For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

L: For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

L: For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

L: Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

C: Amen.

Prayer of the Day

L: 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

C: Amen.

Special Music

“Are You Washed in the Blood”

Christie Dunkley and Diane Ausmus

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.

First Reading: Acts 10:44-48

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.

Psalm 98

L: Sing a new song to the LORD, who has done marvelous things,

C: whose right hand and holy arm have won the victory.

L: O LORD, you have made known your victory,

C: you have revealed your righteousness in the sight of the nations.

L: You remember your steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel;

C: all the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God.

L: Shout with joy to the LORD, all you lands;

C: lift up your voice, rejoice, and sing.

L: Sing to the LORD with the harp,

C: with the harp and the voice of song.

L: With trumpets and the sound of the horn

C: shout with joy before the king, the LORD.

L: Let the sea roar, and all that fills it,

C: the world and those who dwell therein.

L: Let the rivers clap their hands,

C: and let the hills ring out with joy before the LORD, who comes to judge the earth.

L: The LORD will judge the world with righteousness

C: and the peoples with equity.

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.

Second Lesson: 1 John 5:1-6

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.

Gospel Acclamation

Red Worship Book pg. 151

C: Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.

The Holy Gospel according to St. John

C: Glory to you, O Lord. (spoken)

Red Worship Book pg. 151

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.

Gospel: John 15:19-17

[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 Our Lord

C: Praise to you, O Christ. (spoken)

Red Worship Book pg. 151

Children’s Sermon

Sermon: What A Friend We Have In Jesus

Pastor Brenda Wicklund

Last Sunday I received one wild flower from my youngest granddaughter. It melted my heart. With joy, she gave it to me and with joy I received it. The day was great; Kent and I had help getting rid of some long awaited brush to clear. With the help of young grandchildren and our kids, we got the job done, with only my back hurting a little. We were joyful. Great day. Fun.

It was easy to see the joy that day. We have days where joy just explodes and is all around us. Yet we have days where it is hard to be joyful. In our reading today, we hear more of the Final Discourse of Jesus Christ in the Gospel of John. Jesus Christ has said, he is leaving them and the disciples are in disbelief, and were hearing these hard and traumatic words from Jesus. He has asked them to abide with him, to remain with him. Jesus is giving them hope and joy even in these hard times. What do the disciples need to hear at this time? What

happens when the reality is not just in the good-bye, which is not just “see you later” but also a time of mourning this last good-bye?

Jesus has just given them hope in saying I am the vine you are the branches. Go and bear fruit. Jesus also said that I am going to prepare a place for you. I am sending you and you will be my witness (John 15:1-8). In our reading today, Jesus calls the disciples and us his friend.

It talks about friendship. What does friendship mean to us in these times? Facebook? Friends we do not see anymore because of the restrictions? Our family and friends out of reach? It feels like everything is disharmonious most certainly. We can relate to the disciples and Jesus comforts them, gives them what they need, and says, “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you (John 15:12).” Jesus calls them his friends, calls us his friends, and the word can also mean the “beloved one.” The beloved one of Jesus Christ. He will be laying down his life for his friends.

Jesus says to love one another, back to what he said when he washed the disciple’s feet, “I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you should also love one another (John 13:34-35).” All the while, he is washing feet, Judas has just betrayed him and Peter will deny him. Still, love one another he says, he certainly will, and now before he leaves this earth he says once again, love one another his command.

A colleague of mine was talking about these Scriptures where Jesus Christ says to love everyone, even a command I thought. Yet, we both agreed that it is not happening so well. How does Jesus do this and how can we? We only need look around for a bit and realize that it is not happening, yet Jesus calls us to love one another, even lay down our life for each other as a command.

Yet, maybe in times just as the disciples are so sad and so much trauma, much like each of us, Jesus calls us his beloved friends and calls us to joy. “As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love, I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete (John 15: 9, 11).” Joy in you. Joy complete in you. Joy, in all circumstances,” Very truly, I tell you, you will weep and mourn, but the world will rejoice; you will have pain, but your pain will turn into joy. (John 16:20, 21, 22, 24, 17:13 all of these verses talking about joy).”

How can this be possible? Jesus is saying that in all things you are the beloved and let me be a part of all things, and I will make your joy complete. Even though he is leaving, he is promising joy and you will not be alone. Not just in the wonderful joyful times, and especially in the hard times, you will have joy and comfort. That is the promise.

This love from the Father and the Son never leaves you, which is the promise. Because of the resurrection and the promises Jesus makes to us, that you are loved and forgiven, granted grace upon grace, you always have your joy. God needs you in turn and in joy to love one another, and it is wonderful and full of grace. Jesus says this is a command, and go serve and be a servant or slave as I have, and fashion yourself after me. Lead by example, my example the one he set for us, and serve. Love. Forgive. Learn. Grow. Be my witness. Peter asked when the resurrected Lord returns after his denial if Peter loves him and Jesus told him to feed my sheep.

Friends, beloved of God, deepen your relationship with Jesus, who calls you friend. Beloved friends. Serve in love and joy. Amen.

Hymn

“What A Friend We Have in Jesus”

Red Worship Book 732

1 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!

- 2 Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere? We should never be discouraged--take it to the Lord in prayer. Can we find a friend so faithful who will all our sorrows share? Jesus knows our ev'ry weakness--take it to the Lord in prayer.
- 3 Are we weak and heavy-laden, cumbered with a load of care? Precious Savior, still our refuge--take it to the Lord in prayer. Do your friends despise, forsake you? Take it to the Lord in prayer. In his arms he'll take and shield you; you will find a solace there.

Offering Prayer –You may leave your offering as you exit the church, table with offering plates are there.

L: 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. **C: Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

L: 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.)*

L: Loving God, you call us to be your fruit-bearing church. Strengthen the bonds among all Christian churches. Today we pray for the Moravian Church, giving thanks for the life and witness of Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf, renewer of the church and hymnwriter. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

L: 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.

C: Your mercy is great.

L: 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.

C: Your mercy is great.

L: Caring Healer, you forget no one and accompany the lonely. Be present with those who are sick or suffering. Provide for those needing homes or medical care and point us towards life-changing responses to these needs in our own communities. Be with the dying. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

L: Gracious God, as a mother comforts her child, you comfort us. Bless mothers and mothering people in our lives. 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.

C: Your mercy is great.

L: 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.

C: Your mercy is great.

L: 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.

C: Amen.

Words of Institution

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

The Lord's Prayer

Red Worship Book pg. 154

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.

Hymn "Come and Fill Our Hearts" (sing 3 times)

Red Worship Book 528

Come and fill our hearts with your peace. You alone, O Lord, are holy. Come and fill our hearts with your peace. Alleluia

Prayer after Communion

L: Wellspring of joy, through this meal you have put gladness in our hearts. Satisfy the hunger still around us, and send us as joyful witnesses, that your love may bring joy to the hearts of all people, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

Blessing

L: 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.

C: Amen.

Hymn "I Love to Tell the Story"

Red Worship Book 661

1 I love to tell the story of unseen things above, of Jesus and his glory, of Jesus and his love. I love to tell the story, because I know it's true; it satisfies my longings as nothing else would do.

Refrain- I love to tell the story; 'twill be my theme in glory to tell the old, old story of Jesus and his love.

2 I love to tell the story: how pleasant to repeat what seems, each time I tell it, more wonderfully sweet! I love to tell the story, for some have never heard the message of salvation from God's own holy word.

Refrain

3 I love to tell the story, for those who know it best seem hungering and thirsting to hear it like the rest. And when, in scenes of glory, I sing the new, new song, I'll sing the old, old story that I have loved so long.

Refrain

Dismissal

L: Alleluia! Christ is risen

C: Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

L: Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!

C: Thanks be to God. Alleluia!



the worship is ended ... let the service begin...

The Noisy offering this month is for Altar Guild, there will be a bowl as you exit the church.

Next Week's Readings and Psalm

First Reading

[Acts 1:15-17, 21-26](#)

Second Reading

[1 John 5:9-13](#)

Psalm

[Psalm 1](#)

Gospel

[John 17:6-19](#)

First Lutheran Church
301 Lawler Avenue South
P.O. Box 459
Hinckley, MN 55037

Non-Profit Organization
U. S. Postage
PAID
Hinckley, MN 55037
Permit No. 37

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

