



6<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost – July 4, 2021

## WELCOME

We welcome everyone to worship this Sixth Sunday after Pentecost. No matter how great the need, no matter how rational despair may seem, the Lord saves. Our great and everlasting recourse is Christ our Savior. And where shall we find him? Where else but in his saving Word! May the Lord bless your worship!

## PRAYER BEFORE WORSHIP

Heavenly Father, I have come to worship you. Draw near to me in your gracious Word, and assure me of your loving kindness. Curb my wandering thoughts, that with undivided attention I may hear your voice and sing you praise. Amen.

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## SERVICE OF THE WORD

### OPENING HYMN – CW 580 v. 1,2      *Every Morning Mercies New*

1 Ev'ry morning mercies new Fall as fresh as morning dew;  
Ev'ry morning let us pay Tribute with the early day.  
For your mercies, Lord, are sure; Your compassion will endure.

2 Still your kindness and your love Ev'ry day our sins remove;  
Daily, far as east from west, Lift the burden from the breast;  
Give unbought to those who pray Strength to live for you each day.

Text: Greville Phillimore, 1821–84, alt.

**M:** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

**C:** **And also with you.**

**M:** We have come into the presence of God, who created us to love and serve him as his dear children. But we have disobeyed him and deserve only his wrath and punishment. Therefore, let us confess our sins to him and plead for his mercy.

**C:** **Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against you and do not deserve to be called your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray: Have mercy on me according to your unfailing love. Cleanse me from my sin, and take away my guilt.**

**M:** God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, he has removed your guilt forever. You are his own dear child. May God give you strength to live according to his will.

**C:** **Amen.**

**M:** In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord.

**C:** Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good. Blessed are they who take refuge in him.  
Your Word, O Lord, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens. Your faithfulness continues forever.  
Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good. Blessed are they who take refuge in him.

**M:** O God, you have prepared joys beyond understanding for those who love you. Pour into our hearts such love for you that, loving you above all things, we may obtain your promises, which exceed all that we can desire. We come for your blessing through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C:** Amen.

### **FIRST LESSON – Lamentations 3:22-33**

*Amidst the rubble of Jerusalem and the ashes of God's house, Jeremiah sings this song of trust! What is the reason the prophet has for hope? Grace, and grace alone!*

Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. 23 They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. 24 I say to myself, "The Lord is my portion; therefore I will wait for him." 25 The Lord is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him; 26 it is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord. 27 It is good for a man to bear the yoke while he is young. 28 Let him sit alone in silence, for the Lord has laid it on him. 29 Let him bury his face in the dust— there may yet be hope. 30 Let him offer his cheek to one who would strike him, and let him be filled with disgrace. 31 For no one is cast off by the Lord forever. 32 Though he brings grief, he will show compassion, so great is his unfailing love. 33 For he does not willingly bring affliction or grief to anyone.

### **PSALM 30 (sung in unison) CW p. 76**

**Refrain:** At the works of your hands, O Lord, I lift up my voice in song; I sing for joy.

Sing to the LORD, you saints of his;\*  
praise his holy name.

For his anger lasts only a moment,\*  
but his favor lasts a lifetime;

weeping may remain for a night,\*  
but rejoicing comes in the morning.

**Refrain:** At the works of your hands, O Lord, I lift up my voice in song; I sing for joy.

To you, O LORD, I called;\*  
to the Lord I cried for mercy.

Hear, O LORD, and be merciful to me;\*  
O LORD, be my help.

You turned my wailing into dancing,\*  
that my heart may sing to you and not be silent.

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son\*  
and to the Holy Spirit,  
as it was in the beginning,\*  
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

**Refrain:** At the works of your hands, O Lord, I lift up my voice in song; I sing for joy.

Refrain Tune: Steven Warner. © 1983 GIA Publications, Inc., Chicago, IL, www.giamusic.com. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

## **SECOND LESSON - 2 Corinthians 8:1-9,13,14**

*So powerful is God's grace that God himself gave up every appearance of majesty and glory. He did not need material goods or earthly honor--grace was sufficient to strengthen and motivate Christ to endure all things for us. That same grace is active in the lives of those made rich by Christ's poverty. Christians share grace when they share the gospel. They show the power of Christ's grace when they share material blessings even if it means temporary suffering for self on behalf of others.*

And now, brothers and sisters, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. 2 In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. 3 For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, 4 they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord's people. 5 And they exceeded our expectations: They gave themselves first of all to the Lord, and then by the will of God also to us. 6 So we urged Titus, just as he had earlier made a beginning, to bring also to completion this act of grace on your part. 7 But since you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you—see that you also excel in this grace of giving. 8 I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others. 9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich. 13 Our desire is not that others might be relieved while you are hard pressed, but that there might be equality. 14 At the present time your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need. The goal is equality.

## **VERSE OF THE DAY - Mark 8:34**

**M:** Alleluia! If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. Alleluia!

**C:** Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! These words are written that we may believe the Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

## **GOSPEL LESSON - Mark 5:21-24, 35-43**

When Jesus had again crossed over by boat to the other side of the lake, a large crowd gathered around him while he was by the lake. Then one of the synagogue leaders, named Jairus, came, and when he saw Jesus, he fell at his feet. 23 He pleaded earnestly with him, "My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live." 24 So Jesus went with him.

35 While Jesus was still speaking, some people came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue leader. "Your daughter is dead," they said. "Why bother the teacher anymore?" 36 Overhearing what they said, Jesus told him, "Don't be afraid; just believe." 37 He did not let anyone follow him except Peter, James and John the brother of James. 38 When they came to the home of the synagogue leader, Jesus saw a commotion, with people crying and wailing loudly. 39 He went in and said to them, "Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep." 40 But they laughed at him. After he put them all out, he took the child's father and mother and the disciples who were with him, and went in where the child was. 41 He took her by the hand and

said to her, “Talitha koum!” (which means “Little girl, I say to you, get up!”). 42 Immediately the girl stood up and began to walk around (she was twelve years old). At this they were completely astonished. 43 He gave strict orders not to let anyone know about this, and told them to give her something to eat.

M: This is the Gospel of our Lord.

**C: Praise be to you, O Christ!**

**HYMN – CW 350 v. 1-3,5**      *All Praise Be Yours*

1 All praise be yours, for you, O King divine,  
Your rightful glory freely did resign  
That in our darkened hearts your grace might shine. Alleluia!

2 You came to us in lowliness of thought;  
By you the outcast and the poor were sought,  
And by your death was God’s salvation wrought. Alleluia!

3 O Jesus, let your mind within us be,  
For you were servant that we might be free  
And humbly stooped to death on Calvary. Alleluia!

5 Let ev’ry tongue confess with one accord  
In heav’n and earth that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
And God the Father be by all adored. Alleluia!

Text: F. Bland Tucker, 1895–1984, alt. From *The Hymnal* 1982. © unknown.

**SERMON – Romans 15:5,6**

May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**“May God Give a Spirit of Unity”**

Do you recall in the months following the attacks on the World Trade Towers in 2001 the many tributes, expressions support, and outpouring of national grief and anger? Though it was a traumatic event, it did have a positive influence on the people of America. I have a particular recollection of a billboard on Hwy 29 west. There was a picture of a crowd of people, but the focus was on a man with a small girl on his shoulders and she was waving an American flag. The billboard said simply: “Unity. Pass it on.”

On the July 4th nearly twenty years on from 9/11, would you say that unity is characteristic of America today? What happened? Some disunity is the natural result of time-fading memory. In twenty years, a number of people have been born who have no connection with the event and its aftermath. There have been a couple contentious national elections. The multitude of opinions about Covid have fractured us. There’s work to be done in America to regain unity.

You have lived through some months of challenges in the congregation. Multiple factors can be attributed as causes. But if things break down it is our responsibility to rebuild unity and a team spirit.

But God grants us help. St. Paul leads off this text with a description of God, “the source of patient endurance and encouragement.” These are valuable commodities if trying to build a congregation. But best is the ability of our God to give a spirit of unity among all believers. Whether or not a congregation has any problems, it is valuable to see what the Lord can do for us.

As St. Paul encourages us to develop and/or rebuild Christian unity, as with America as a whole, there could be racial division. There remains the divide between the haves, and the have-nots. There are political preferences that are developed somewhat by our past experiences. There are those who have the power to lead, and those who are consigned to follow.

All of the above can be present within a Christian congregation. There can be members with different racial backgrounds. That isn't the case currently with Our Savior's, but it could be if we were to be blessed in our evangelism efforts. You note encouragement to modify our attitudes on racial differences in some of the hymn choices today. But since it's not a primary challenge for now, let's leave that aside. There are different political points of view among us. The responses to COVID-19 brought that out all across the Wisconsin Synod, it wasn't a local issue only. But today I wish to focus on the dynamic of challenged to lead and challenged to follow.

Some may say that unity happens when there is absolute equality in the church—no leaders, no followers. First of all, a pure democracy is impossible, or at least, highly inefficient. If you've studied the Greek beginnings of democracy, you have to wonder how they got anything done. But second, even God, who says we must respect and honor each other as equals in salvation—and above us in consideration of needs—God not only speaks of leaders within his church but makes provisions for leaders to take charge. There will always be leaders and always be followers.

During their first missionary journey, we are told that Paul and Barnabas “had elders elected,” (Acts 14:23 footnote) in the new congregations they established. Leaders come to the fore because the congregation voted them in. This does not prove the superiority of a leader; he wouldn't be leading if the congregation didn't choose him.

The Lord does speak of certain individuals “with gifts of administration.” Yet God has given all kinds of gifts to all kinds of people. You may be a leader, but not a good teacher. You may be a leader, not an evangelist. We need all these gifts and more, for a congregation to work properly. Understanding that he has been elected and that his gifts are not greater than any other should preserve a humble, unifying spirit in a leader.

If so, what will a leader think of his followers? Our text excellently puts it in proper perspective. Who's following whom? St. Paul speaks of God granting a spirit of unity, the NIV put it, “as you follow Christ.” Certain people may be called leaders, but nobody's in front except Jesus. If a leader turned around and saw many people behind him, he might be tempted to think what a great leader he is. He needs to turn back to the front and see that they're not following him, they're following Jesus.

That's an important reminder for me. Yes, a call puts me in front of you visually, but still behind Jesus. Sermons need to be about Jesus. Bible class needs to be about Jesus. I pray that God grants me consistency in holding Jesus before your eyes. It is a reminder for council members. Leaders are given authority and responsibility, but they're still serving Jesus. That's the key for anyone leading a congregation.

For this reason, Jesus told his disciples: “The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who have authority over them are called Benefactors. But it is not to be that way with you,” (Luke 22:25,26). An improper attitude is to lord leadership over others. Such a leader is no longer following Christ but his own path. And someday he may look behind and find no followers. They kept following Jesus.

And give Jesus credit for being a follower, too. After all, Jesus was following the instructions of someone else. His Father said go down to earth and live the righteous life of obedience to all his laws. This Christ did since we were not living in accordance with the will of God. Every time we push our way to the fore is setting aside God's will for us. Jesus humbly served.

We might also mention that he served us. In a sense he was following our needs; that our desperate straits led him in his life choices. He followed a path not to get his own good, but ours!

Ultimately this led Jesus to the cross to give up his life as the perfect sacrifice. This, too, was a following, for he famously spoke to his Father, “Not my will, but yours be done.” Christ is our leader, but he is an excellent follower.

This realization will prompt the person elected to lead to faithfully fill his role. St. Paul’s encouragement back in chapter 12 of this same letter was: “if (the gift) is leadership, be diligent.” But it is always part of “offering ourselves” to God (12:1,2).

It is the utmost concern to “glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” In view of his great mercy in Jesus, all Christians want to glorify God. Jesus’ willing life for us, leads us all to a life for him. If leaders know that they are no better than anyone else, we won’t have leaders making their noise over here, and followers making their noise over there. Rather, as our text declares, “with one mind, in one voice, (we) glorify” God.

Now, for one mind and one heart to function together, some have to follow instructions.

How do followers get to be followers? One explanation is that if leaders are elected to lead, then followers become followers because they didn’t elect themselves to lead. They became followers because they choose to follow.

But a better explanation is that followers have been given the gift of following. In this letter, St. Paul encourages, “If (a person’s gift) is serving, then serve.”

How many people would think that following—or serving—is a gift? Don’t most people believe that you only follow because you haven’t been promoted to be leader yet?

Imagine a world of leaders without followers. Leaders would have many brilliant ideas—but nothing would ever be accomplished.

All the automakers have design personnel on their staff. These individuals think up new car concepts and designs. But they still need an engineering crew to turn these super ideas into a workable car. And they still need the factory workers to put that car on the road. Do you think Elon Musk makes the cars or the SpaceX rockets? It takes a special person to bring vision into reality.

Most Christian congregations have leaders who think up new plans and programs, or how to use old programs more efficiently. But it still takes the gifted server to put these ideas into action. It takes an effective follower. And that is a gift from God!

It’s jumping the gun a little bit but think of what goes into phenomenal Christmas celebrations. It takes all kinds of servers to pull that off!

It takes teachers to prepare the children to sing or recite. We need altar trimmers and tree trimmers, and artists, who make the sanctuary beautiful. It takes musicians and singers who rehearse special music. It takes a few more hours for the secretary, or as is often the case, many volunteers to assemble the special bulletins, or service presentation screens; an organist to limber their fingers for those beloved Christmas tunes. Will we have a meal, or even a few after-service desserts this upcoming holiday season? It’ll take someone—or some-ones—to assume that. You want glory for God? When we all pull together it happens. To borrow a phrase, it takes a village.

A non-holiday service like this still has more people involved than you might first guess. I didn’t program the air conditioner. I didn’t pay the light bill. I didn’t clean the carpets and the pews. I didn’t print the bulletins; Maybe I should do a few of those things too, but the point is, it takes a lot of people to just to facilitate worship. And this congregation loves its school. Who’s been here early in summer and will be back late in order to have the building ready for kids?

This perspective has a great, positive effect on Christian unity and glory to God. The school isn’t for me, it isn’t for most of you. But we support it and make it happen for others—for the kids. If a person’s gift is serving, let him/her serve!

If both leaders and followers understand that we are working for each other, or for someone else entirely, we won't have leaders in this corner making their own noise, and followers in that corner beating a different drum. Rather with one mind and one mouth we will sing our song of praise together to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I know that we had a challenge to going the same direction. We won't be foolish enough to think that we will never have differences of opinion in the future. But "may God, the source of patient endurance and encouragement, grant that you agree with one another in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that with one mind, in one voice, you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." AMEN.

### **APOSTLES' CREED**

I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

### **PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

**M:** Our God in heaven: Father, Son and Holy Spirit; we thank you for the precious Christian fellowship which we are now enjoying in your name.

**C:** **We thank you for the privilege of hearing your Word by which we grow in faith and in the joy of Christian unity.**

**M:** O heavenly Father, as we look upon the week just ended, we must confess that we have not always obeyed your Word and Commandments. How often we have sinned and deserve only your wrath!

**C:** **But we ask you to forgive our sins for the sake of your Son, whom you sent to die on the cross for us.**

**M:** O Lord, Jesus Christ, help us cling to you forever in true faith as our Savior who loved us and redeemed us with your own precious blood.

**C:** **Through your Word and Sacrament increase our faith and deep our appreciation of your sacrifice on Calvary. May our lives more and more reflect your love which has taken over our hearts.**

**M:** O Holy Spirit, open our hearts to the Word of truth spoken here today. Cause us to mature in the faith and to have a deeper love for our God and for one another.

**C:** **Grant us the gifts of patience, kindness and gentleness, that we may help family and neighbors, that we may be forgiving, that we may live honestly with all people.**

**M:** As we speak with you this morning, we especially ask for your grace and healing for these people...

*Special prayers followed by brief silence for personal prayer and meditation.*

**M:** May our voices lifted together be united in praise now and in eternity, that all may know that you are the blessed Triune God of grace. All this we ask in Jesus' name, as we also join to pray...

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

## HYMN – CW 539 *In Christ There Is No East or West*

1 In Christ there is no east or west, In him no south or north,  
But one great fellowship of love Throughout the whole wide earth.

2 With God there is no tribe or race; In him we all are one.  
He loves us as his children through Our faith in his dear Son.

3 So, brothers, sisters, praise his name Who died to set us free  
From sin, division, hate, and blame, From spite and enmity!

4 Join hands, disciples of the faith, Whate'er your race may be;  
Who serves my Father as his child Is surely kin to me.

5 In Christ now meet both east and west; In him meet south and north.  
All Christly souls are one in him Throughout the whole wide earth.

Text: John Oxenham, 1852–1941, st. 1, 4–5; Mark A. Jeske, b. 1952, st. 2; Michael Perry, b. 1942, st. 3. St. 2 © 1993 Mark A. Jeske. All rights reserved. Used by permission. St. 3 © 1982 The Jubilate Group (admin. Hope Publishing Co., Carol Stream, IL 60188). All rights reserved. Used by permission.

## CLOSING PRAYER & BLESSING

M: O Lord God, our heavenly Father, pour out the Holy Spirit on your faithful people. Keep us strong in your grace and truth, protect and comfort us in all temptation, and bestow on us your saving peace, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

M: Brothers and sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another. Serve the Lord with gladness.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.

C: Amen. Amen. Amen.

## CLOSING HYMN – CW 249 *God of Mercy, God of Grace*

1 God of mercy, God of grace, Show the brightness of your face.  
Shine upon us, Savior, shine; Fill your Church with light divine,  
And your saving health extend To the earth's remotest end.

2 Let the people praise you, Lord! Be by all that live adored.  
Let the nations shout and sing Glory to their Savior King,  
At your feet their tribute pay, And your holy will obey.



3 Let the people praise you, Lord, Then enjoy your rich reward!  
 God to us his blessing give, We to God devoted live,  
 All below and all above One in joy and light and love.

Text: Henry F. Lyte, 1793–1847, alt.

***Thank you for worshipping with us!***

**Annual Voter’s Meeting** The 2021-22 suggested budget was presented to the congregation last Sunday. Our Savior's voters will meet on Sunday, July 18 at 10:00 AM to vote on the budget. Please plan to attend.

**Memorial** We thank LaVina Sleeter for her gift to school given in memory of her nephew, Brian Laffin. *Blessed be his memory. Thanks be to God for the love which led to this gift.*

<b>This Week’s Opportunities for Growing in Christ</b>		
<b>Today (7/4)</b>	9:00 AM	Worship
<b>Thursday</b>	6:30 PM	Worship with Communion
<b>Sunday 7/11</b> – Food Pantry	9:00 AM	Worship with Communion

<b>Our Stewardship of God’s Gifts: June 27, 2021</b>					
<u>Weekly</u>	<u>Vision</u>	<u>Debt Red</u>	<u>Plate</u>	<u>Missions</u>	<u>OS School</u>
\$3,573.00	\$145.00	\$260.00	\$57.00	\$40.00	\$100.00

**Attendance:** June 24 & 27: 20 & 69, online – 24 Total = 113



*Growing in Jesus, Sharing His Love*

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