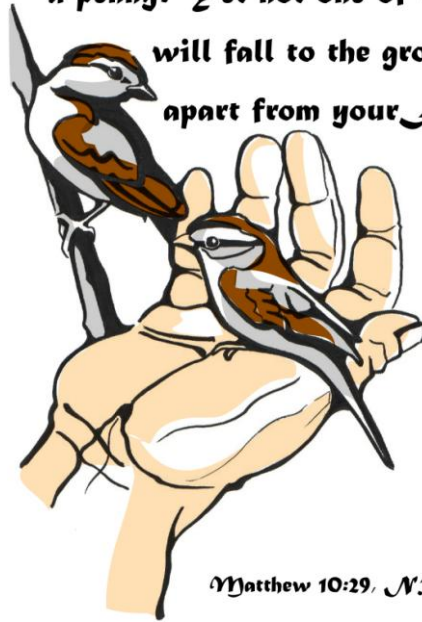


*Third Sunday after Pentecost*  
*Sunday, June 21, 2020*

*"Are not two sparrows sold for  
a penny? Yet not one of them  
will fall to the ground  
apart from your father."*



*Matthew 10:29, NRSV*

*Welcome to Our Savior's Lutheran Church!*

We are "a worshiping and caring Christian community, sharing God's compassion and grace with all people in need of love and acceptance within this congregation, the community, and the world!"

## PRELUDE

## INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY

God does not promise that the path of the disciple will be easy. Jeremiah feels the pain of rejection from those who do not want to hear what he has to say. Jesus declares that his words may bring stark division. Even so, we need not be afraid for God accounts for each hair on our heads. Though we may experience rejection, frustration, division, and death, God's grace and love make us a new creation each day. Marked with the cross and filled with holy food, we are sent from worship to witness to Christ in the world.

## WELCOME

### Gathering

#### GATHERING HYMN

"Lift High the Cross"

# 660



Lift high the cross, the love of Christ pro - claim till



all the world a - dore his sa - cred name.



1 Come, Chris - tians, fol - low where our cap - tain trod,  
2 All new - born ser - vants of the Cru - ci - fied  
3 O Lord, once lift - ed on the glo - rious tree,  
4 So shall our song of tri - umph ev - er be:

*Refrain*



our king vic - to - rious, Christ, the Son of God.  
bear on their brows the seal of him who died.  
as thou hast prom - ised, draw us all to thee.  
praise to the Cru - ci - fied for vic - to - ry!

Text: George W. Kitchin, 1827–1912; rev. Michael R. Newbolt, 1874–1956

Music: CRUCIFER, Sydney H. Nicholson, 1875–1947

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## 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.**



1 Glo-ry be to God in heav-en; peace, good-will to all the earth.  
 2 Glo-ry be to Christ for - ev - er, Lamb of God and Lord of love.  
 3 Ho - ly One we now ac-claim you; Lord a - lone, to you we call;



Might-y God of all cre - a - tion, Fa - ther of sur - pass - ing worth:  
 Son of God and gra - cious Sav - ior, you have come from heav'n a - bove;  
 Ho - ly One in faith we name you, God most high, yet near to all:



we ex - alt you, we a - dore you, we lift high our thanks and praise.  
 on the cross you died to save us; now you reign at God's right hand.  
 Je - sus Christ, with God the Spir - it, in the Fa - ther's splen - dor bright.



Saints and an - gels bow be - fore you; here on earth our songs we raise.  
 Hear our prayer; re - store, for - give us; in your prom - ise firm we stand.  
 For the peace that we in - her - it, glo - ry be to God on high!

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Teach us, good Lord God, to serve you as you deserve, to give and not to count the cost, to fight and not to heed the wounds, to toil and not to seek for rest, to labor and not to ask for reward, except that of knowing that we do your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

## CHILDREN'S SERMON

### Word

#### FIRST READING

#### Genesis 21:8-21

*Sarah demands that Abraham send Hagar and her son, Ishmael, away. Abraham is distressed because he is Ishmael's father. Sarah wants to ensure that her son, Isaac, will be the one to inherit God's blessing. God, however, hears Hagar's cry and promises to also make of Ishmael a great nation. A reading from Genesis.*

<sup>8</sup>The child Isaac grew, and was weaned; and Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned.

<sup>9</sup>But Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, playing with her son Isaac.

<sup>10</sup>So she said to Abraham, "Cast out this slave woman with her son; for the son of this slave woman shall not inherit along with my son Isaac." <sup>11</sup>The matter was very distressing to Abraham on account of his son. <sup>12</sup>But God said to Abraham, "Do not be distressed because of the boy and because of your slave woman; whatever Sarah says to you, do as she tells you, for it is through Isaac that offspring shall be named for you. <sup>13</sup>As for the son of the slave woman, I will make a nation of him also, because he is your offspring." <sup>14</sup>So Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread and a skin of water, and gave it to Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, along with the child, and sent her away. And she departed, and wandered about in the wilderness of Beer-sheba.

<sup>15</sup>When the water in the skin was gone, she cast the child under one of the bushes. <sup>16</sup>Then she went and sat down opposite him a good way off, about the distance of a bowshot; for she said, "Do not let me look on the death of the child." And as she sat opposite him, she lifted up her voice and wept. <sup>17</sup>And God heard the voice of the boy; and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven, and said to her, "What troubles you, Hagar? Do not be afraid; for God has heard the voice of the boy where he is. <sup>18</sup>Come, lift up the boy and hold him fast with your hand, for I will make a great nation of him." <sup>19</sup>Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water. She went, and filled the skin with water, and gave the boy a drink. <sup>20</sup>God was with the boy, and he grew up; he lived in the wilderness, and became an expert with the bow. <sup>21</sup>He lived in the wilderness of Paran; and his mother got a wife for him from the land of Egypt.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM**

*(Read responsively, men and women)*

**Psalm 86:1-10, 16-17**

<sup>1</sup>Bow down your ear, O LORD, and answer me,  
for I am poor and in misery.

**<sup>2</sup>Keep watch over my life, for I am faithful;  
save your servant who trusts in you.**

<sup>3</sup>Be merciful to me, O Lord, for you are my God;  
I call upon you all the day long.

**<sup>4</sup>Gladden the soul of your servant,  
for to you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.**

<sup>5</sup>For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving,  
and abundant in mercy toward all who call upon you.

**<sup>6</sup>Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer,  
and attend to the voice of my supplications.**

<sup>7</sup>In the time of my trouble I will call upon you,  
for you will answer me.

**<sup>8</sup>Among the gods there is none like you, O Lord,  
nor anything like your works.**

<sup>9</sup>All the nations you have made will come and worship you, O Lord,  
and glorify your name.

**<sup>10</sup>For you are great; you do wondrous things;  
and you alone are God.**

<sup>16</sup>Turn to me and have mercy on me;  
give your strength to your servant, and save the child of your handmaid.

**<sup>17</sup>Show me a sign of your favor, so that those who hate me may see it and be put to shame;  
because you, LORD, have helped me and comforted me.**

**SECOND READING**

**Romans 6:1b-11**

*In baptism, we were incorporated into the reality of Christ's death and resurrection. We have been made new in Christ through his death and resurrection to live freed from sin. A reading from Romans.*

<sup>1b</sup>Should we continue in sin in order that grace may abound? <sup>3</sup>By no means! How can we who died to sin go on living in it? <sup>4</sup>Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? <sup>5</sup>Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. <sup>6</sup>For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. <sup>7</sup>We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. <sup>8</sup>For whoever has died is freed from sin. <sup>9</sup>But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. <sup>10</sup>We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion

over him. <sup>10</sup>The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. <sup>11</sup>So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

p. 205



Al - le - lu - ia! Lord and Sav - ior: o - pen now your sav - ing word.



Let it burn like fire with - in us; speak un - til our hearts are stirred.



Al - le - lu - ia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.

The holy gospel according to the 10<sup>th</sup> chapter of St. Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

## GOSPEL

**Matthew 10:24-39**

*Jesus warns his disciples that their ministry in his name will meet with opposition. However, he assures them that they need not fear for the truth will come to light. Life is found in Christ.*

Jesus said to the twelve: <sup>24</sup>“A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master; <sup>25</sup>it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher, and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household! <sup>26</sup>“So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. <sup>27</sup>What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. <sup>28</sup>Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. <sup>29</sup>Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. <sup>30</sup>And even the hairs of your head are all counted. <sup>31</sup>So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.

<sup>32</sup>“Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; <sup>33</sup>but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven. <sup>34</sup>“Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. <sup>35</sup>For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; <sup>36</sup>and one’s foes will be members of one’s own household. <sup>37</sup>Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; <sup>38</sup>and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. <sup>39</sup>Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.”

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

## SERMON

My Dad passed away late in August of 2005. That means that this summer, he will have been gone for 15 years. He died as a result of health complications brought on by Hepatitis, which he contracted from a blood transfusion he received during heart surgery in the early ‘80’s.

And I’m ashamed to have to say this now, but there was a time when I was a teenager when I didn’t care for my Dad so much. Because I thought he was hopelessly uncool. He watched TV shows that I would never

want to watch, like the evening news and 60 Minutes, and he ate strange things, like cream cheese and jelly sandwiches and cottage cheese with corn syrup poured over the top. He grew up as the second child in a family of seven kids, which seemed to make him very competitive. He could be a bear to play board games with, so much so that after awhile I just didn't want to play with him anymore. And he was cheap, watching every penny. I remember him bawling me out once for buying a video game that he thought was too expensive—even though I'd used my allowance to buy it. He had a temper on him, too, and pretty early on I felt I had to learn how to not make him mad. These all probably seem like relatively small things, but at one point in my life I was determined not to turn out like my Dad. I wanted to be different.

And for awhile, in my early adult years, I thought I was different. I was my own person, living carefully so that I wouldn't repeat my father's mistakes. But as I continued to grow up, a funny thing happened. I found that I was beginning to appreciate my father in new ways. I think most of you know that I started out in ministry as a Catholic priest. But I met Patrice and fell in love and then wanted to leave the priesthood, and become a part of the ELCA, if they would have me. And I thought I was prepared for my Dad to hate me because of this, and I braced myself for the worst. But instead, it turned out that my Dad was amazingly supportive of me, and that helped make a difficult transition a little easier. After that, I found that my relationship with my Dad was improving. I started to see my Dad with new eyes. His kindness. His sense of humor. His basic human decency. He was very handy with home improvement projects, far more than I'll ever be. He did his own taxes and offered great advice. And he had this ability to pay attention to the people he was talking with—really pay attention—so that you really felt like you were being heard. Now I'm sure that some of the things that I did, and that my brothers did, caused him pain over the years. But it really means something to me that at the end of my last conversation with him before he died, I was able to tell him that I loved him. And he said that he loved me, too. And I know that's true.

It just seemed appropriate for me to share all that with you because, well, it's Father's Day. But though we may celebrate this day with our Dads, or with our memories of them, with our children, and with our sons who may be Dads of their own, at first glance, our scriptures for today don't seem to fit in with that celebration very well.

You've got Abraham banishing his oldest son, the son he had with Hagar, to the wilderness along with his mother, with basically nothing at all to support them. And yes, I'm aware that Abraham regrets having to do this, and only does so after God reassures him that everything is going to turn out okay. But still, Abraham is not exactly "Father of the year" material here.

And then there's the gospel, where Jesus outlines some of the perils of following him—including that divisions are going to be felt in families because of him—sons against fathers, daughters against mothers, with one's foes being members of one's own household. Also, not a particularly happy thought to be sharing on Father's Day.

But I guess one of the things that we need to be bringing with us whenever we encounter this gospel is the realization that Jesus is talking about making sure that we have our priorities straight. We're not supposed to be making an idol out of our relationships with our own families. Our lives are meant to be defined by our love for God, and then by the love we have for our families and others. And there can be problems when that gets out of order.

Perhaps Jesus' main point can be found in the opening lines of this gospel reading: a disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master. Those who follow Jesus can expect to receive the same kind of treatment that Jesus received. Apparently, calling other people names was also a thing in Jesus' time, because we learn that his opponents were calling him "Beelzebul," meaning that they were implying that Jesus was associating with demons in order to do the things that he was doing. And so Jesus' followers shouldn't expect to be treated any better.

But at the very heart of the gospel, there is a story about God loving humanity so much that the distance between God and humanity was something that God was not willing to endure. And, as a sign of this, in this reading Jesus tells us that no matter what, we are always going to remain under the care of God. And that care is so intimate and loving that even the death of a sparrow doesn't happen without his notice. God has numbered the very hairs upon our head, which is intended for us as a sign of the abundance of God's love for us.

It's certainly not the case that Jesus, or the Bible as a whole, is against fathers, against families. We know that the Bible actually has a lot to say about caring for one another, and especially within the family. And

though it's true that there are some who have used today's gospel as an excuse to neglect their own family so that they can concentrate on "the Lord's work," I hope you know that that isn't what Jesus is really saying here.

The really important thing is to always live in the light of God's love. That's what Jesus did, and, as his followers, we need to be doing the same. I said a little earlier that there was a time in my life when I wanted to be different than my father. But I think I've learned enough by now to be able to say that if I'm able to be even a little bit like my father, that would be a good thing. I know my Dad wasn't perfect. I don't know any Dad who is. But somehow, through his life and his example, my Dad ended up teaching me a lot about the love and gentleness of my heavenly Father, the one who can save my life. I hope your Dad was able to do that, too. Happy Father's Day. Amen.

**HYMN OF THE DAY**

**"Lord Jesus, You Shall Be My Song"**

# 808



1 Lord Je - sus, you shall be my song as I jour - ney;  
2 Lord Je - sus, I'll praise you as long as I jour - ney.  
3 As long as I live, Je - sus, make me your ser - vant,  
4 I fear in the dark and the doubt of my jour - ney;



I'll tell ev - 'ry - bod - y a - bout you wher - ev - er I go:  
May all of my joy be a faith - ful re - flec - tion of you.  
to car - ry your cross and to share all your bur - dens and tears.  
but cour - age will come with the sound of your steps by my side.



you a - lone are our life and our peace and our love.  
May the earth and the sea and the sky join my song.  
For you saved me by giv - ing your bod - y and blood.  
And with all of the fam - 'ly you saved by your love,



Lord Je - sus, you shall be my song as I jour - ney.  
Lord Je - sus, I'll praise you as long as I jour - ney.  
As long as I live, Je - sus, make me your ser - vant.  
we'll sing to your dawn at the end of our jour - ney.

Text: Les Petites Soeurs de Jésus and L'Arche Community; tr. Stephen Somerville, b. 1931

Music: LES PETITES SOEURS, Les Petites Soeurs de Jésus and L'Arche Community

Text and music © 1987 Les Petites Soeurs de Jésus

Tr. © 1970 Stephen Somerville

## 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.

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Called into unity with one another and the whole creation, let us pray for our shared world.

Expansive God, you bring diverse voices together to form your church. Open our hearts and unstop our ears to learn from one another, that differences might not overshadow our baptismal unity. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Providing God, your creation shows us that life comes from death. Renew the places where our land, air, and waterways have been ill for too long. Direct the work of all who care for birds and their habitats. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Protecting God, sustain and keep safe all who work to defend others across the world. Revive and strengthen organizations dedicated to caring for refugees and migrants while their homelands struggle for peace. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Sheltering God, as we commemorate the martyrdom of the Emanuel Nine, who in 2015 were killed while assembled in their Charleston church for Bible study, we pray: end the scourge of racism and white supremacy; protect protestors; halt those who intend violence; preserve our democracy. Raise up leaders who model repentance and reconciliation, and support legislators who seek justice in our land. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Gracious God, you call us to serve all in need. Bless the ministry and work of Doorstep in our community. Keep Doorstep staff, volunteers and clients safe, and may all be served. Hear us O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Loving God, you promise to be with all who are persecuted for your sake. Guide all who speak your word of justice and console any who are tormented or targeted for being who they are. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Compassionate God, you are with us and we are never alone. Bless all fathers and father figures who strive to love and nurture as you do. Comfort all who long to be fathers and all for whom this day is difficult. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Reigning God, you bless us with guides and caretakers in the faith. As we give thanks for those who have died, increase our care for one another until we walk with them in newness of life. Please remember those that we name aloud or in the silence of our hearts. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Receive these prayers, O God, and those too deep for words; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



**PEACE**

**OFFERING**

*“To God Be the Glory”*

**OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray. God of mercy and grace, the eyes of all wait upon you, and you open your hand in blessing. Fill us with good things at your table, that we may come to the help of all in need, through Jesus Christ, our redeemer and Lord. **Amen.**

**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.**

**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*

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**BLESSING**

God all mighty, God most merciful bless us, keep us, and ☩ grant us peace. **Amen.**

**SENDING HYMN**

*“I Love to Tell the Story”*

# 661



1 I love to tell the sto - ry of un - seen things a - bove,  
2 I love to tell the sto - ry: how pleas - ant to re - peat  
3 I love to tell the sto - ry, for those who know it best



of Je - sus and his glo - ry, of Je - sus and his love.  
what seems, each time I tell it, more won - der - ful - ly sweet!  
seem hun - ger - ing and thirst - ing to hear it like the rest.



I love to tell the sto - ry, be - cause I know it's true;  
I love to tell the sto - ry, for some have nev - er heard  
And when, in scenes of glo - ry, I sing the new, new song,



it sat - is - fies my long - ings as noth - ing else would do.  
the mes - sage of sal - va - tion from God's own ho - ly word.  
I'll sing the old, old sto - ry that I have loved so long.

*Refrain*

I love to tell the sto - ry; 'twill be my theme in glo-ry  
to tell the old, old sto - ry of Je - sus and his love.

Text: Katherine Hankey, 1834–1911  
Music: HANKEY, William E. Fischer, 1849–1936

## BENEDICTION

*“We Shall Go Out”*

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Christ is with you. **Thanks be to God.**

## POSTLUDE

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## Announcements

As we approach the twentieth anniversary of our full communion agreement, *“Called to Common Mission,”* we give thanks to God for the partnership we share with The Episcopal Church. In the coming months, we will pray for and with one another, seeking spiritual renewal in these challenging times, and revival for the common mission we share.

From Pentecost Sunday through the first Sunday in September, Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton and her Episcopal counterpart Presiding Bishop Michael Curry welcome congregations and individuals to regularly pray *“A Prayer for the Power of the Spirit Among the People of God.”* This prayer – crafted by a team of Lutheran and Episcopal prayer leaders in light of the COVID-19 pandemic – will connect us in common prayer and revive us for common mission, wherever and however we may be gathered.

At Pentecost, we celebrate the power of the Holy Spirit. In our diversity, we are united through God’s presence among us. We are amazed and astonished. United in Christ, and joined by common prayer, the Advocate calls and sends us out in common mission. Come, Holy Spirit.

### *A Prayer for the Power of the Spirit among the People of God*

*God of all power and love, we give thanks for your unfailing presence and the hope you provide in times of uncertainty and loss. Send your Holy Spirit to enkindle in us your holy fire. Revive us to live as Christ’s body in the world: a people who pray, worship, learn, break bread, share life, heal neighbors, bear good news, seek justice, rest and grow in the Spirit. Wherever and however we gather, unite us in common prayer and send us in common mission, that we and the whole creation might be restored and renewed, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

- ◆ Remember that you are invited to **borrow a hymnal from church** for use in your own times of devotion and worship. Just sign them out on the sheets on the table.
- ◆ **Pat Dunavan** has placed several **Thrivent T-shirts in the Fellowship Hall**. If you would like one, please feel free to pick one up next time you are at the church. They are available in medium and large sizes.
- ◆ **Lorene Bruntzel has been busy making face masks**, and she has graciously provided a box of them for the church! The masks are available in the church's fellowship hall, on the same table as the hymnals.

- ◆ Please be aware that our Executive Council continues to be in conversation about a possible re-opening date. We have recently learned that Shawnee County has revised the recommended maximum numbers for gatherings to 45 people beginning in phase 3 of the plan. Although this was discussed at the Council meeting, held on June 8, it's beginning to look like the earliest we can hope to be back together may be the weekend of June 27/28. We also plan to continue to put out our own bulletin every week, including the music we would've sung, along with a printed copy of a sermon from me. I hope that you have been able to make use of these materials. If you feel that you would not be comfortable attending church yet in person, then by all means stay home. We will understand. This is a work in progress for all of us.
- ◆ I also ask you to remember to continue to support our church as you are able. Although we are not going to be able to gather together for awhile, the expenses and needs of the church go on. Your support makes this ministry possible. As we continue to navigate these unprecedented waters, please continue to be safe. And remember that God is with us.

**JUNE 21, 2020**  
**THIRD SUNDAY**  
**AFTER PENTECOST**



*Christ gives us a new life.*

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS**

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Matthew 10:24-39</b>	<b>The call and cost of discipleship</b>
<b>Monday</b>	<b>Jeremiah 20:7-13</b>	<b>Jeremiah denounces his persecutors</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Romans 6:1b-11</b>	<b>Dying and rising with Christ</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Genesis 21:8-21</b>	<b>Hagar and Ishmael are sent away</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Psalm 86:1-10, 16-17</b>	<b>Save me, Lord</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>Ephesians 4:17-24</b>	<b>The old and the new life</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Psalm 69:7-18</b>	<b>God can be trusted</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Matthew 10:40-42</b>	<b>Receiving and serving others</b>

**SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK**

Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in the newness of life. **Romans 6:4 (NRSV)**

**PRAYERS AND BLESSING**

**A Prayer for the Week:**

Merciful God, help us to trust that all that we are and hope to be is found in the new life we have through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Mealtime Prayer:**

Dear God, all good things come from you; thank you for your goodness that gives us food to eat this day. Amen.

**A Blessing to Give:**

May God draw near to you and free you from your fears through Christ your Lord. (Psalm 69:18)



**JUNE 21, 2020**

**HYMN OF THE WEEK**

*Lord Jesus,  
You Shall Be My Song*



**WEEKLY MILESTONES**

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

**CARING CONVERSATIONS**

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- What is something you would like to accomplish in the next year?
- What is it about that accomplishment that is important to you?
- Why do you think Jesus wants us to value a relationship with him above all things?

**DEVOTIONS**

*Read:* Matthew 10:24-39.

Core values are important because they define what we stand for and who we are. Jesus indicates that following him is non-negotiable and an all-or-nothing proposition. Sometimes we must let go of what we treasure in life to gain what really counts in God's kingdom. In the process, Jesus gives a number of stark contrasts, many of which are hard to hear. Following Jesus will lead some to be rejected by family, which was a reality in first century Christianity and can be true today, too. Acknowledge Jesus and he will acknowledge you. Deny him and he will deny you. In the midst of these tough passages is Jesus' repeated theme of not being afraid (vv. 26, 28, and 31). Jesus warns us not to deny him before others, but Peter does three times before Jesus' crucifixion (Matthew 26:69-75). What Peter learns is that mercy, not judgment is the ultimate core value in the kingdom. God's mercy takes away our fear. Jesus calls us to make a difference and to rely on him. We all falter. Jesus doesn't. This is the newness of life that the Apostle Paul identifies (Romans 6:4) for the baptized that stands out for its dramatically different way of living. How does God's mercy help you not to be afraid?

*Pray:* **Dear God, may our life in Christ give us peace and good courage as we live each day with others. Amen.**

**SERVICE**

Sunday is Father's Day. Take time to offer prayers of thanksgiving and support for fathers and all men as they seek to be caregivers to those around them. Begin your prayers by saying, "Dear God, thank you for (name) . . ." Contact or visit those for whom you have prayed and/or send them a card as a sign of your appreciation and thankfulness.

**RITUALS AND TRADITIONS**

Baptism involves the mystery of God's work that claims us as God's own in Christ. Think about or tell a story about your baptism or that of someone else. Fill a bowl with water. Dip your fingers into the water. Make the sign of the cross on your forehead or that of another person. *Say:* **May God bless you with new life in Christ each and every day.**



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: [www.milestonesministry.org](http://www.milestonesministry.org)