

Worship in the Home: June 6, 2021

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Worship in the Home

Second Sunday after Pentecost

Lectionary 10, Year B

June 6, 2021

In this time of world-wide crisis, congregations throughout this church are not able to gather for worship as the body of Christ. While you cannot be together in person, we can hear the word of God and hold each other in prayer. We offer this brief resource as an aid for prayer in the home. As with our prayers in the gathered assembly for worship, you are encouraged to prepare or adapt them locally for your context.

A house divided against itself cannot stand. Jesus makes this observation in light of charges that he is possessed. He is possessed, not by a demon, but by the Holy Spirit. We who have received the Holy Spirit through baptism have been joined to Christ's death and resurrection and knit together in the body of Christ. Those with whom we sing and pray this day are Jesus' family. With them we go forth in peace to do the will of God.

Find a peaceful place to pray, perhaps a table. You may wish to light a candle and place a bowl of water in remembrance of your baptism. One person may lead this acclamation and then pray the Prayer of the Day.

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

Amen.

Let us pray.

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

All-powerful God, in Jesus Christ you turned death into life and defeat into victory. Increase our faith and trust in him, that we may triumph over all evil in the strength of the same Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

First Reading: Genesis 3:8-15

Immediately after Adam and Eve eat the forbidden fruit, they hide from God. Neither takes responsibility for their sin, instead blaming each other, the snake, and even God. The curse on the snake was understood as a messianic prophecy by the early church, who associated Eve's "offspring" with Christ.

⁸The man and the woman heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹But the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" ¹⁰He said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." ¹¹The LORD God said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" ¹²The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate." ¹³Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent tricked me, and I ate." ¹⁴The LORD God said to the serpent,
"Because you have done this,
cursed are you among all animals
and among all wild creatures;
upon your belly you shall go,
and dust you shall eat
all the days of your life.
¹⁵I will put enmity between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and hers;
he will strike your head,
and you will strike his heel."

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 130

¹Out ¹of the depths
I cry to ¹you, O Lord;
²O LORD, ¹hear my voice!
Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my ¹supplication.
³If you were to keep watch ¹over sins,
O LORD, ¹who could stand?
⁴Yet with you ¹is forgiveness,
in order that you ¹may be feared.
⁵I wait for you, O LORD; ¹my soul waits;
in your word ¹is my hope.
⁶My soul waits for the LORD more than those who keep watch ¹for the morning,
more than those who keep watch ¹for the morning.
⁷O Israel, wait for the LORD, for with the LORD there is ¹steadfast love;
with the LORD there is plenteous redemption.
⁸For the LORD shall ¹redeem Israel
from ¹all their sins.

Second Reading: 2 Corinthians 4:13—5:1

Life in the present is transitory and cannot compare with the eternal home God has prepared for us. So we do not despair no matter what life might bring because we know that as God raised Jesus from the dead, God promises to bring us into eternal life.

¹³Just as we have the same spirit of faith that is in accordance with scripture—"I believed, and so I spoke"—we also believe, and so we speak, ¹⁴because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus, and will bring us with you into his presence. ¹⁵Yes, everything is for your sake, so that grace, as it extends to more and more people, may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.

¹⁶So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, ¹⁸because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.

^{5:1}For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel: Mark 3:20-35

The holy gospel according to Mark.

Glory to you, O Lord.

In response to charges that he is possessed, Jesus wonders aloud how anyone who is demon-possessed can cast out demons. Those who do the will of God are possessed by the Holy Spirit, siblings of Christ.

[Jesus went home;] ²⁰and the crowd came together again, so that [Jesus and the disciples] could not even eat. ²¹When his family heard it, they went out to restrain him, for people were saying, "He has gone out of his mind." ²²And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, "He has Beelzebul, and by the ruler of the demons he casts out demons." ²³And Jesus called them to him, and spoke to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan? ²⁴If a dominion is divided against itself, that dominion cannot stand. ²⁵And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. ²⁶And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, Satan cannot stand, but is coming to an end. ²⁷But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his property without first tying up the strong man; then indeed the house can be plundered. ²⁸Truly I tell you, people will be forgiven for their sins and whatever blasphemies they utter; ²⁹but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit can never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin"—³⁰for they had said, "He has an unclean spirit."

³¹Then his mother and his brothers came; and standing outside, they sent to him and called him. ³²A crowd was sitting around him; and they said to him, "Your mother and your brothers and sisters are outside, asking for you." ³³And he replied, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" ³⁴And looking at those who sat around him, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! ³⁵Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Reflection

Having read these readings, think on this:

We all are the woman and the man in the old legend about the beginning of sin: we are afraid; we blame each other; we blame the serpent; we blame even God. Evil is very real and we find ourselves trapped in its strong house. But Jesus Christ, in the power of the Spirit, can pull us out of that house. Though he is mocked by others, even by his own family, and though he is finally killed, by his cross he plunders the house of evil. The grace of God in his death and resurrection makes of us a new and eternal house, a place of thanksgiving. When we hear the scriptures today, we are with Jesus in his house. He calls us his new family. We will see that house when, at last, we are able to gather with others around word and sacrament. Formed by his word and formed by that gathering with him, we turn to do the will of God in loving our neighbors.

If you have a hymnal, you may now sing or read "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 503, 504, 505), "I'm So Glad Jesus Lifted Me" (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 860). Selected hymns are provided below for those without a hymnal at home.

[I'm So Glad Jesus Lifted Me](#)

Then pray these intercessions:

Let us come before God in prayer, responding to each petition with words from today's psalm, "We cry to you, O Lord."

A brief silence.

O God, on this Sunday we ask you to sustain believers around the world. Give wisdom to pastors, musicians, and church committees as they make plans for their summer worship.

A brief silence.

For the church we pray:

We cry to you, O Lord.

On this National Animal Rights day, we ask you to safeguard animals, both wild and tame. Give them the habitat they need, and rescue all animals from abuse.

A brief silence.

For the earth we pray:

We cry to you, O Lord.

On this anniversary of D-Day, we ask you to bring an end to warfare throughout the world. Halt the violence between nations, on our streets, and inside our homes. Heal the wounds of prejudice, and embolden all who strive for peace.

A brief silence.

For the nations we pray:

We cry to you, O Lord.

During this month of many weddings, we ask you to bless all marriages. Nourish the fidelity of partners for one another, and be yourself a companion to those who live alone.

A brief silence.

For home life we pray:

We cry to you, O Lord.

On this National Cancer Survivors Day, we ask you to strengthen both those who are recovering from disease and those who now face death. Bring healing to humanity as it struggles against the coronavirus.

A brief silence.

For recovery from illness we pray:

We cry to you, O Lord.

Always we ask you to comfort all who suffer and to heal the sick. Provide care for all persons afflicted with mental illness, and sustain their families. Visit those whose pain is hidden from us and those we name here before you: . . .

A brief silence.

For the sick we pray:

We cry to you, O Lord.

Once again we ask that you empower each of us, that we never lose heart, and that you receive our silent prayers.

A brief silence.

For ourselves we pray:

We cry to you, O Lord.

We remember with gratitude those who have lived and died in the faith, especially those we name here before you, and we ask you to welcome us with them into your eternal life.

A brief silence.

For life forevermore we pray:

We cry to you, O Lord.

Into your hands, mighty God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen

If you have a hymnal, you may now sing or read "Build Us Up, Lord" (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 670), "Though the Earth Shall Change" (All Creation Sings 1035). Selected hymns are provided below for those without a hymnal at home.

[Through the Earth Shall Change](#)

Then conclude with these prayers:

Let us pray.

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

We thank you, O God, for your life-giving Word,
for calling creation into being,
declaring forgiveness from the cross,
and delivering the spirit of rebirth.
We praise you, O God, for your Word:
we praise you, O God, for your Word.
Your word is a lamp lighting our path,
a mirror reflecting our selves,
a shield providing us refuge,
a fire burning for justice and truth.
Your word is sweeter than honey:
it nourishes our bodies like milk,
it sustains your people like bread.
We receive your promises, more treasured than gold.
We bless you, O God, for your Word:
we bless you, O God, for your Word.
Open our ears to your prophets, apostles, and saints,
and to all the cries of the needy.
Breathe into your church the mighty Spirit of Christ,
that heeding your voice of beauty and power
we are strengthened to serve wherever we are called.
To you, Father, Son, and Spirit—the Source, Word, and Breath—
we offer our thanks for your life-giving Word.
We offer our thanks for your life-giving Word.
Amen.
Amen.

Offering Prayer

Jesus, Bread of life, you have set this table with your very self, and called us to the feast of plenty. Gather what has been sown among us, and strengthen us in this meal. Make us to be what we receive here, your body for the life of the world. **Amen.**

Please remember to mail in your offerings so that Grace can continue to serve you. (Our mailbox has a lock on it, so is secure.)

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.

Then speak the Blessing:

Almighty God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless us now and forever.
Amen.

Devotional Music Links: For your individual or group devotion, you may choose to listen to the following choral recordings made available through Augsburg Fortress: "[Great Is Thy Faithfulness](#);" "[Gathered Chosen, God's Creation](#);" "[May Your Unfailing Love Be With Us](#)."

Readings for the Week:

Monday (commemoration of Seattle, chief of the Duwamish Confederacy, 1866) Psalm 74. **Tuesday** Revelation 20:7-15. **Wednesday** (commemoration of Columba, 597; Aidan, 651; Bede, 735; renewers of the church) Luke 11:14-28. **Thursday** Psalm 92:1-4, 12-15. **Friday** (Barnabas, Apostle) Acts 11:19-30; 13:1-3. **Saturday** Mark 4:1-20. **Third Sunday**

after Pentecost Ezekiel 17:22-24; Psalm 92:1-4, 12-15; 2 Corinthians 5:6-10 [11-13] 14-17; Mark 4:26-34. Visit ELCA.org/Lectionary for a full listing of readings assigned to each day.

Daily Prayer Resources are available, including simple forms of Morning, Evening, and Night Prayer; Responsive Prayer; and prayers for mealtimes and other occasions.

Due to copyright restrictions, we are only able to provide downloadable hymns that are in the public domain and selected hymns for limited use. To purchase copies of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* and *All Creation Sings* for the home, visit the Augsburg Fortress website or call 1-800-328-4648. Selected hymns from *All Creation Sings* are provided for limited use.

Reflection text: Gordon Lathrop. Intercessory Prayer: Gail Ramshaw.

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Thank you to those who clean the Church following worship.

Thank you to those who provide you with these worship services.

Thank you to everyone who helped clean the church and surrounding area.

"Our church is looking for an Administrative Assistant to replace Diane Eddy who is retiring as soon as possible. This position will support our future pastor, the Council and Congregation, by managing the Church office. This is a paid position working 15-18 hours a week. A full position description is posted on the fellowship hall bulletin board. If interested please contact Diane (426-3343) or any Council member. (Elizabeth Eddy, Walt Ford, Len Flesher, Joe Frauenshuh, Carole Holten, Lynette Maas, Dick Rohde, Ron Smith, Bev Streeter)"

Special Congregational meeting following worship on July 18th.

Upcoming Special Events:

1. June 20: Fathers Day – Men to pick out their favorite hymns (Please do this by June 13th)
2. June 27: New Member Sunday: if you would like to join Grace please talk to one of the Council members (Elizabeth Eddy, Walt Ford, Len Flesher, Joe Frauenshuh, Carole Holten, Lynette Maas, Dick Rohde, Ron Smith, Bev Streeter)
3. July 18: Second vote to disassociate from the Synod, will also be able to vote in the parking lot.
4. July 25: Sunday Summer Camp with s'mores. More info coming.
5. Sometime in August we will have a Church Picnic.

(If you would like to help with any of these events or would like to be on the Worship & Music Team please contact one of the members - Sue Berg, Bernis Geving, Pat Jonson, Alice Graff, Aileen DeMenge, Dick Rohde & Diane Eddy)

Please keep in your prayers this week: Kevin Johnson, Barbara Metzger, Rob Johnson and Steve Lindberg (Streeter Family Friend's & Kin), Cal Curtis & Patty Thompson (Carole Holten's Son-in-Law & Sister), Carole Holten, Lois Goossen (Friend of the Newgard's), Mary (Tammy Ford's Sister), Danny Vorbeck.

This will be the last bulletin I will be sending out. If you would like to keep reading them you can go to: blogs.elca.org/worship

Pastoral Mid-week message for June 2, 2021

Hold on to your values. Go deeper into your faith. **And look for a victory.** So often we see in life what we are looking for. If you are looking only for defeat, you will see defeat all around you. If you look for victory, however, victory you are likely to find. "Now is the judgement of this world," says Jesus to His disciples, "now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from earth, will draw all people to myself."

Jesus wasn't just going to declare Himself king over Jerusalem, or over the Jews, or over the Roman empire. He had bigger plans. By His death, He would draw all peoples to Himself. But it was only through His death that Jesus could offer us eternal life. No matter how badly life may be going for you, God can still bring a victory.

In 1995, Vietnamese evangelist To Dihn Trung was arrested and beaten by the police. Then they threw him in jail. His crime? Preaching the Gospel of Christ. While in jail, Trung began preaching to the other inmates. Finally, after six months, outside pressure from Christians around the world forced the Vietnamese government to release Trung. But he refused his release. So many men in the prison were coming to Christ that Trung decided to stay there and serve out his full sentence. He said, "I don't care about my own life. The most important thing is that I complete my mission, the work that the Lord Jesus gave me – to tell people the good news about God's grace." Trung never expected to find himself in prison for sharing his faith, but even in prison he experienced a great victory.

So, you're looking at your life right now. You expected one thing, but you got something else. That does not mean you are not in the center of God's will. It just means that our ways are not God's ways.

Ancient records tell us most of Jesus' disciples were persecuted and killed for their faith. And it is from their blood the early church was formed. Two thousand years later, people are still gathering every week in churches all over the world to celebrate the message they first told. What do you do when life does not turn out as you expected? Hold on to your values. Go deeper into your faith. Look for God's victory.

Pastor Bill Sass Sermon for Sunday, May 30, 2021

A TIME TO REMEMBER

Revelation 7:13-17

(Memorial Day)

Memory is a tricky thing as we get older. You may know the story about three women who were talking.

The first said, "Sometimes I go to the refrigerator, and forget what I need by the time I get there."

The second woman said, "When I go upstairs, I can't remember whether I'm going up for something, or I'm on my way back down."

The third woman said, "I'm lucky, I guess (knocking on wood). I don't have that problem. Oh, there's someone at the door."

One of our older comedians says he can always find his car in a parking lot—it's the one with the lights on.

Memory is a tricky thing. There are some things, however, that we should never forget. One is sacrifice others have made in our behalf.

It was a spring morning in 1866, just after the Civil War devastated the South. A group of Southerners did something quite extraordinary. They marched down the streets of what was left of their town to a cemetery. There they decorated the graves of the soldiers. ALL the soldiers—Union as well as Confederate.

The mothers, daughters, and windows had buried their dead. Now they buried their hatred. The time for healing had come. It was the first Memorial Day.

Have you ever wondered why Memorial Day is in May? Its date doesn't recall some historic battle. Or the start of some war. Or the signing of an armistice. Why, then, May?

For a very practical reason. Because it is a time when flowers bloom. Flowers to decorate graves. Remember when Memorial Day was called Decoration Day, when cemeteries were filled with people kneeling to plant a flower, unfurl a flag, or say a prayer? Some still do. But most people can no longer be bothered. It would take time away from the beach, back yard, and ball park.

At the National Cemetery on Long Island, one of the nation's largest, it has become necessary to advertise for volunteers to place flags on the graves of veterans as the number of veteran volunteers decreased.

However, many who volunteer have no idea why they are there.

One young man, a 13 year-Old Scout, was asked if he understood why members of his Boy Scout Troop were placing flags on the graves. He quickly replied, "To get service hours."

Memorial Day is not one of our major holidays. But we need to remember. WE NEED TO REMEMBER THE DEBT WE OWE TO OTHERS.

You and I do not have what we have today by our own efforts alone. We owe an enormous debt from the moment we come into this world. Some of that debt is owed to young men and women who shed their blood on battle fields. Many of them gave their lives because they truly believed that freedom is worth dying for.

To honor their sacrifice is not to glorify war. War is the ultimate blasphemy against God. Still, we live in a cruel world where tyrants impose their will on others. It would be nice if people always played by the rules; where no one coveted his neighbor's property, where never again would we have to depend upon military might to enforce justice. But such a world does not yet exist. We do not know what dangers may yet await us.

When the war between the states flared up, a young Texan enlisted and marched off to fight with his friends. "We won't be gone long," he claimed, "cause we can lick them Yankees with broom sticks."

Four years later, when the fighting was finally over, the young man came home, a beaten man. One of his neighbors asked, "What happened? I thought you were gonna beat them Yankees with broom sticks."

"We could have," replied the young man, "Except we couldn't get 'em to fight with broomsticks."

It would be nice if we could really eliminate our defense establishment with knowledge that no nation would ever commit aggression against its neighbor again. But that's not the way the world is.

Winston Churchill used to tell a parable about a zoo, in which all the animals decided to disarm. They arranged 'peace talks' to work out the details. The rhinoceros asked for a strict ban against

the use of teeth in war. The stag and porcupine agreed, but the lion and tiger defended teeth as being honorable weapons. The bear, however, wanted both teeth and horns to be banned, but suggested that all animals be allowed to give each other a good hug when they quarreled. This only served to offend all the other animals, and so they never could agree.

That's the kind of world we live in. And thus, through the centuries, young men, and sometimes young women, have been sacrificed in the cause of one noble ideal after another. Some of these wars have been senseless, and barbaric, to be sure. But others have been necessary. We honor the memory of those who have given their lives, believing they were making the world safer, freer, and more humane.

OF COURSE, OTHERS HAVE GIVEN THEIR LIVES WHO NEVER WORE A UNIFORM, NEVER CARRIED A GUN. Our Scripture lesson talks about those who "wash their robes in the blood of the lamb." Those who have given their lives in the service of Jesus Christ. And there have been hundreds of thousands of such sacrifices through the ages.

In the sixteenth century, there was a bloody purge of Christians in Scotland. Thousands of ministers and lay persons suffered for Christ's sake. Many were hanged, or slaughtered in cold blood. Some of these believers endured the torture of burning at the stake, or being beheaded. Patrick Hamilton was a young Scotsman, twenty-four years old, when he was sentenced to die.

As he was led to the stake, and the fire was burning at his feet, he pulled off his outer garments, and handed them to his servant, saying, "These will not profit me in the fire, yet they will do thee some good." Hamilton was taunted by one of his persecutors to deny God, but answered, "Wicked man! Thou knowest I am not at gu[ilt, and that is the truth of God, for which I now suffer."

As the fire burned, the young martyr called out, "How long, O Lord, shall darkness overwhelm this realm? How long will Thou suffer this tyranny of man?" As he was being consumed by flames, he prayed like the Biblical Stephen, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

While we remember those who have died in battle, we also need to remember committed followers of Jesus like Patrick Hamilton. They died in battle too—the battle between light and darkness. Their sacrifices remind us how anemic our own witness for Christ sometimes is. They gave their all. We must not forget them.

AND THERE IS ONE MORE WE NEED TO REMEMBER THIS DAY. IT IS THE LAMB HIMSELF—THE LAMB SLAIN BEFORE THE WORLD.

A soldier was mortally wounded. His buddy Jim stayed by him to the very end.

"Jim, I'm going to die," Charlie whispered to his friend. Knowing Jim had no family of his own, Charlie added, "But I want you to go back to my mother, and take my place there."

"But Charlie, your mother doesn't know me," Jim reminded his dying comrade, "and she would not allow me to come into her home, and live as a son."

"I will write her a letter, and you will take it to her," Charlie explained. The letter told the mother of her son's wounds, and his suffering, and how Jim had stuck by him day and night through it all. The letter closed like this, "Mother, receive Jim for my sake."

Jim carefully tucked the letter away in his waistcoat. After the close of the war, he went to Charlie's hometown and sought out the mother's home. He knocked at the door and stood waiting, ragged and worn from the ravages of war, a very unsightly character.

As the lady opened the door, she looked upon him and thought him to be just another beggar passing by. But Jim handed her the letter through the half-opened door. She read it, recognizing her son's handwriting. When she read the last line, "Mother, receive Jim for my sake," the

expression on her face changed, tears of deep emotion welled up inside, and she threw the door open wide, receiving Jim "for Charlie's sake."

According to our Bibles, that sort of acceptance is the story of the cross. God accepts us as His own beloved children, for Christ's sake. We may not understand why it had to be this way. But we look at the cross, and see there an open door.

And thus we remember. We remember those who died that we may live in freedom. We remember those who died, that we may live in faith. We remember Christ who died, that we may live forever. That's the ultimate meaning of this Memorial Day weekend. It is a time to remember, and finish what they started.

They were shooting the movie, Yankee Doodle Dandy, on the day after Pearl Harbor. The cast listened as President Roosevelt announced on the radio that the United States was at war with Japan and Germany. At that point, director Michael Curtiz came on the sound stage with Jimmy Cagney. They all listened in silence for the national anthem to finish. As the women dabbed tears from their eyes, and the men were deeply moved, Curtiz said in his best Hungarian accent:

"Now, boys and girls, we have work to do. We have bad news, but we have a wonderful story to tell the world. So, let's put away sad things, and begin."

That's our challenge, too. We remember with sadness, and gratitude, the sacrifices others have made in our behalf. Now we go out to tell our story.

AMEN!!

"S.D.G."