

THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

JUNE 6, 2021

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH, FALLS CHURCH, VA



PRELUDE

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

Setting: John Leavitt

WELCOME

ENTRANCE HYMN (Stand) #501 Sts. 1, 2, 4

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

- 1 A mighty fortress is our God,
A trusty shield and weapon;
He helps us free from ev'ry need
That hath us now o'ertaken.
The old evil foe
Now means deadly woe;
Deep guile and great might
Are his dread arms in fight;
On earth is not his equal.
- 2 With might of ours can naught be done,
Soon were our loss effected;
But for us fights the valiant One,
Whom God Himself elected.
Ask ye, Who is this?
Jesus Christ it is,
Of Sabaoth Lord,
And there's none other God;
He holds the field forever.
- 4 The Word they still shall let remain
Nor any thanks have for it;
He's by our side upon the plain
With His good gifts and Spirit.
And take they our life,
Goods, fame, child, and wife,
Though these all be gone,
Our vict'ry has been won;
The Kingdom ours remaineth.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Our help is in the name of the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.

If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?
But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared.

Since we are gathered to hear God's Word, call upon Him in prayer and praise, and receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in the fellowship of this altar, let us first consider our unworthiness and confess before God and one another that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and that we cannot free ourselves from our sinful condition. Together as His people let us take refuge in the infinite mercy of God, our heavenly Father, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, and saying: God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

(We observe a moment of silence for self-reflection.)

Together we pray:

Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.

Almighty God, merciful Father, in Holy Baptism You declared us to be Your children and gathered us into Your one, holy Church, in which You daily and richly forgive us our sins and grant us new life through Your Spirit. Be in our midst, enliven our faith, and graciously receive our prayer and praise; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

KYRIE

In peace let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy.

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

Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy.

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.

Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy.

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

Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy.

GLORIA IN EXCELSIS

**1 To God on high be glory
And peace to all the earth;
Goodwill from God in heaven
Proclaimed at Jesus' birth!
We praise and bless You, Father;
Your holy name, we sing—
Our thanks for Your great glory,
Lord God, our heav'nly King.**

**2 To You, O sole-begotten,
The Father's Son, we pray;
O Lamb of God, our Savior,
You take our sins away.
Have mercy on us, Jesus;
Receive our heartfelt cry,
Where You in pow'r are seated
At God's right hand on high—**

**3 For You alone are holy;
You only are the Lord.
Forever and forever,
Be worshiped and adored;
You with the Holy Spirit
Alone are Lord Most High,
In God the Father's glory.
"Amen!" our glad reply.**

THE PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray. Almighty and eternal God,

Your Son Jesus triumphed over the prince of demons and freed us from bondage to sin. Help us to stand firm against every assault of Satan, and enable us always to do Your will; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.



THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST LESSON (Be seated)

Genesis 3:8-15

[Adam and Eve] heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself." He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

The LORD God said to the serpent,

"Because you have done this,
cursed are you above all livestock
and above all beasts of the field;
on your belly you shall go,
and dust you shall eat
all the days of your life.

I will put enmity between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and her offspring;
he shall bruise your head,
and you shall bruise his heel."

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 130 (Read responsively)

Out of the depths

I cry to you, O LORD!

O Lord, hear my voice!

**Let your ears be attentive
to the voice of my pleas for mercy!**

If you, O LORD, should mark iniquities,

O Lord, who could stand?

**But with you there is forgiveness,
that you may be feared.**

I wait for the LORD, my soul waits,

and in his word I hope;

**my soul waits for the Lord
more than watchmen for the morning,
more than watchmen for the morning.**

O Israel, hope in the LORD!

For with the LORD there is steadfast love,
and with him is plentiful redemption.

**And he will redeem Israel
from all his iniquities.**

**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.**

SECOND LESSON

2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1

Since we have the same spirit of faith according to what has been written, "I believed, and so I spoke," we also believe, and so we also speak, knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence. For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.

So we do not lose heart. Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

For we know that if the tent, which is our earthly home, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

ALLELUIA VERSE (Stand)

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

These things are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark the 3rd chapter
Glory to You, O Lord.

Then [Jesus] went home, and the crowd gathered again, so that they could not even eat. And when his family heard it, they went out to seize him, for they were saying, “He is out of his mind.”

And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, “He is possessed by Beelzebul,” and “by the prince of demons he casts out the demons.” And he called them to him and said to them in parables, “How can Satan cast out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but is coming to an end. But no one can enter a strong man’s house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. Then indeed he may plunder his house.

“Truly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the children of man, and whatever blasphemies they utter, but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin” — for they had said, “He has an unclean spirit.”

And his mother and his brothers came, and standing outside they sent to him and called him. And a crowd was sitting around him, and they said to him, “Your mother and your brothers are outside, seeking you.” And he answered them, “Who are my mother and my brothers?” And looking about at those who sat around him, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ.

SERMON

Grace, mercy and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus. Amen. Dear friends in Christ:

Recently we had a contractor at our house to install a new HVAC unit. He was friendly, professional, and did an excellent job. At the end of the day, as he was doing his paperwork, we could see in his folder a large picture. Before we could even ask about it, he took it out and said: “This is my family - my wife and children. I take them with me everywhere. They are the loves of my life.”

It was wonderful to see a man so happy about his family. Sadly, not everyone is. Many people conclude that family life is mostly about pain and frustration. These are the ones who minimize the time and energy they spend with family and like to remark that “friends are the ones you choose while family are the ones you’re stuck with.”

The scriptures quite clearly promote the importance of family life. At the very beginning, God creates Adam and quickly declares that it is not good for him to be alone. He then creates Eve to be his wife – making the two of them the first family.

Yes, we soon see that family life is not perfect. Adam and Eve both fall into sin, with Adam quickly blaming his wife. Then their first son, Cain, kills his brother Abel.

Still, the balance of the scriptures going forward show that family commitments are to be highly sought and valued. Noah’s sons are taught not to disrespect their father. God promises a great family to Abraham. Abraham goes to great lengths to find the right wife for his son Isaac. Isaac makes sure to extend the family blessing to his eldest child (even though it didn’t quite work out that way). Jacob works 14 years to earn the wife he loved. Jacob’s sons are loyal to him and band together, mostly, through their many adventures.

And then, when God gives Moses the Ten Commandments, we see that one of the commandments speaks specifically about parents and children. And, after Moses shares all the commands of God, God mentions that the learning of these commands starts in the home, saying: “These words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise” (Deut. 6:6-7). The Law was given for Israel’s children and their children’s children. It was for family.

Today’s Gospel reading, by contrast, gives a slightly different message. Here we have a story that suggests some limits on the family’s importance.

The text opens with Jesus’ family going out to seize him, because they have concluded that Jesus is out of his mind. Today we would call this an intervention. Jesus’ family is concerned about him and feels it is their responsibility to do something about it. That’s what family does.

And why would Jesus’ family think he was crazy? Wasn’t he doing things that were helpful? Preaching, teaching, healing, casting out evil – these were all good things, right?

Perhaps the family was concerned about the pace Jesus was keeping. According to the first few chapters of Mark, Jesus was everywhere – one minute going to a synagogue and healing on the Sabbath, the next minute casting out evil spirits. And not only was the workload heavy, but Jesus was also attracting great crowds. One time he had to teach beside the water from a boat lest he be crushed by the mass of people. In today’s reading he and his disciples couldn’t even eat because of the crowd.

As much as these things may have caused concern, one scripture suggests that the family’s real concern was something greater. In John chapter seven (v.5) we are told that Jesus’ brothers did not believe in him. That being the case, while the family could tolerate his caring and helping, they wouldn’t have tolerated all he said and did – especially when he acted like an established Rabbi by calling disciples, and even more when he appointed twelve of them as apostles – doing so in some kind of ceremony up on the mountain as if he were Moses himself.

The family would have been especially disturbed when Jesus started to contradict the teachings and traditions of the established religious leaders.

As it turned out, some of those leaders soon came all the way from Jerusalem with an intervention of their own. And while the family simply claimed that Jesus was out of his mind, the scribes said something far more condemning. They said Jesus was possessed by the Devil and did his deeds by the Devil’s power. To emphasize the threat this would cause the people, they even used the name “Beelzebul”—a name that comes from the old Canaanite name for its fertility god—Baal the prince.

In facing the Scribe’s intervention, Jesus defends himself by saying that their accusation is illogical. How can Jesus be the Devil if he is casting out devils from those who were possessed? To make his point, he tells a parable about entering a strong man’s house. “If you’re going to enter the strong man’s house and take his goods,” he says, “you must bind him.” The parable points to Jesus himself, who was doing just that. He was entering the Devil’s domain, binding him, and taking back those whom the Devil had possessed.

Jesus, we could say, was doing his own intervention. He was intervening in the Devil’s case against mankind... that case being the claim, and reality, that the people’s sin condemned them to death.

Jesus’ intervention would eventually send him to the cross. There he would complete his intervention by dying for the sins of the world.

And this intervention of Jesus is the greatest gift one could ever receive, for it means that the one who has received it has been made right with God. Their sins are forgiven. Their hope for life has been restored.

Jesus, however, also makes clear that those who will not accept his intervention are guilty in a new way. They are guilty of resisting the Holy Spirit. And this sin is unforgivable.

Jesus does, however, make a distinction between those who resist the Spirit in a hostile way and those whose resistance comes from misunderstanding. Those, like his family, who simply misunderstand will be forgiven. Those, like the scribes, who accuse Jesus of evil will not.

After addressing the intervention attempt by the Scribes, Jesus then addresses the one attempted by his family. When they arrive and stand outside at a distance, beckoning him to leave his new ways and return home, Jesus puts them off, saying to the crowd: “Who are my mother and my brothers?”

These words would have been shocking to those first hearers, for theirs was a society where family was everything. Jesus had rejected his family in favor of standing up for what he believed to be right.

We in the western world of today are only so impressed by this. After all, we’ve been doing this for centuries. It’s very acceptable for a person to be free and independent in this way.

But we should remember that it wasn’t always like this. And that Jesus should receive large credit for the change.

In this text, Jesus pushed against the groupthink that so often characterizes family. Jesus’ family thought they needed to guard the old ways—thinking that if they did this, and if the other families did the same, they would all survive. But would they really? They had survived as a tribe. But only as a tribe. And one that was constantly battling against other tribes.

Jesus came with a greater vision than mere tribalism. His was a vision of the Word of God going out to all the nations, and of the Law promoting peace between people rather than separation. His was a vision of people united in a commitment to what is good and right. Notice that Jesus looked about at those who sat around him and added: “Here are my mother and my brothers! For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother.”

This vision begins with the individual answering for their own sins. And then answering for their own faith.

Without question, much of the individualism of today’s world is an extreme over-reaction to what Jesus taught. Jesus still taught people to live as family... just a greater family. Today we’re so focused on the rights of the individual that we’ve largely forgotten how to live together. And it shows in our distrust of one another.

Jesus in this text doesn’t push back against family. He pushes back against the human impulse of tribalism – that over-commitment to our family that causes us to stop listening to God and to lose sight of the worth of others. Jesus calls us to do the will of God – which means following his commands and committing to the good of all.

And notice, too, that Jesus is careful here not to simply transfer his idea of family to a larger, but still exclusive group. He doesn’t say that his family is now defined as those who follow him as church. Rather, he points to people’s actions. Not their membership.

Yes, we need to be careful not to make too much of this distinction. Jesus does certainly want people to gather as confessors of his name and believers in his salvation. But the distinction should remind us that the church, too, is often guilty of tribalism. Our family of faith can become just as much of an idol as other families can be.

Jesus’s words here should remind us that we are to have a heart for people both inside and outside the church. Yes, we are to have a special heart for our family of faith. We noted this emphasis of the scriptures in our recent Easter season readings. But we need to be careful that the church is not just another tribe.

We are to be a family in the best sense, recalling the words of God to our Father Abraham – “by you, all families of the world will be blessed” (Genesis 12:3).

May God then bless our families. All of them. And may God bless our church family. And may God bless each of us as individuals in his kingdom.

Most of all, may God lead us to do his will. And keep us in faith. In the name of Jesus. Amen.

HYMN OF THE DAY (Stand) #850 Sts. 1, 2, 4 God of Grace and God of Glory

- 1 God of grace and God of glory,
On Your people pour Your pow'r;
Crown Your ancient Church's story;
Bring its bud to glorious flow'r.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage
For the facing of this hour,
For the facing of this hour.**

- 2 Lo, the hosts of evil round us
Scorn the Christ, assail His ways!
From the fears that long have bound us
Free our hearts to faith and praise.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage
For the living of these days,
For the living of these days.**

- 4 Save us from weak resignation
To the evils we deplore;
Let the gift of Your salvation
Be our glory evermore.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
Serving You whom we adore,
Serving You whom we adore.**

APOSTLES' CREED

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

And 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 sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence 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

DEDICATION OF OUR NEW PIANO

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH



THE LITURGY OF HOLY COMMUNION

PREFACE TO HOLY COMMUNION (Stand)

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, for the countless blessings You so freely bestow on us and all creation. Above all, we give thanks for Your boundless love shown to us when You sent Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, into our flesh and laid on Him our sin, giving Him into death that we might not die eternally. Because He is now risen from the dead and lives and reigns to all eternity, all who believe in Him will overcome sin and death and will rise again to new life. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

SANCTUS

**Holy, holy, holy Lord
God of Sabaoth adored;
Heaven and earth with full acclaim
shout the glory of Your name.
Sing hosanna in the highest,
sing hosanna to the Lord;
Truly blest is He who comes
in the name of the Lord!**

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Blessed are You, O Lord our God, king of all creation, for You have had mercy on us and given Your only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

In Your righteous judgment You condemned the sin of Adam and Eve, who ate the forbidden fruit, and You justly barred them and all their children from the tree of life. Yet, in Your great mercy, You promised salvation by a second Adam, Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, and made His cross a life-giving tree for all who trust in Him.

We give You thanks for the redemption You have prepared for us through Jesus Christ. Grant us Your Holy Spirit that we may faithfully eat and drink of the fruits of His cross and receive the blessings of forgiveness, life, and salvation that come to us in His body and blood.

Hear us as we pray in His name and as He has taught us:

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

PAX DOMINI

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Amen.

AGNUS DEI

**O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God,
You take the sin of the world away;
O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God,
Have mercy on us, Lord, we pray.**

**O Jesus Christ true Lamb of God
You take the sin of the world away;
Have mercy on us, Jesus Christ,
And grant us peace, O Lord, we pray.**

DISTRIBUTION (Be seated)

The Communion Assistant will come forward to receive first, then those from the pulpit side – by order of pew, front to back. Communicants will come up the center aisle and return via the side aisle. When all from the pulpit side have communed, the baptismal font side will commune in the same manner. Distancing must be maintained between all communicants. Masks should be kept on except for the moment of consuming the elements. We ask that the wine be consumed away from the tray table. Empty cups should be dropped into the baskets.

COMMUNION MUSIC

Prelude in B Minor By: Johann Sebastian Bach

POST-COMMUNION COLLECT *(Stand)*

BENEDICTION

SENDING HYMN #811 St. 1, 3, 5

Oh, That I Had a Thousand Voices

- 1 **Oh, that I had a thousand voices
To praise my God with thousand tongues!
My heart, which in the Lord rejoices,
Would then proclaim in grateful songs
To all, wherever I might be,
What great things God has done for me.**

- 3 **You forest leaves so green and tender
That dance for joy in summer air,
You meadow grasses, bright and slender,
You flow'rs so fragrant and so fair,
You live to show God's praise alone.
Join me to make His glory known.**

- 5 **Creator, humbly I implore You
To listen to my earthly song
Until that day when I adore You,
Together with the angel throng
And learn with choirs of heav'n to sing
Eternal anthems to my King.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS (Be seated)

DISMISSAL

POSTLUDE

*Symphony No. 4: Gavotte (Allegro)
Setting: William Boyce*

*ALTAR FLOWERS: "In loving memory of Gladys Hane for whom the love of Jesus was and is the source of life.
'Give her the reward she has earned, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate.'"*

By St. Paul's LWML

Those serving:

Sunday, June 6, 8:30 a.m.:

Greeter: Steve Berg

Comm. assist: Judy Koucky

Reader: Judy Koucky

10:30 a.m.:

Greeter: Michael Chamberlain

Comm. assist: Jill Hecht

Reader: Dan Buuck

Acknowledgments

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