

THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

JUNE 20, 2021

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



PRELUDE

Sing Praise to God, the Highest Good

Setting: Keith Kolander

WELCOME

ENTRANCE HYMN (Stand) #819 Sts. 1-3 *Sing Praise to God, The Highest Good*

- 1 Sing praise to God, the highest good,
The author of creation,
The God of love who understood
Our need for His salvation.
With healing balm our souls He fills
And ev'ry faithless murmur stills:
To God all praise and glory!
- 2 What God's almighty pow'r has made,
In mercy He is keeping.
By morning glow or evening shade
His eye is never sleeping.
Within the kingdom of His might
All things are just and good and right:
To God all praise and glory!
- 3 We sought the Lord in our distress;
O God, in mercy hear us.
Our Savior saw our helplessness
And came with peace to cheer us.
For this we thank and praise the Lord,
Who is by one and all adored:
To God all praise and glory!

INVOCATION

BAPTISMAL DESCRIPTION

PRESENTATION FOR BAPTISM

QUESTION TO PARENTS AND SPONSORS

PROFESSION OF FAITH (The Pastor addresses the baptismal group and the congregation)

Do you renounce all the forces of evil, the devil and all his empty promises?

I do.

Do you believe in God the Father?

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

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

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 sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

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.

✠ THE BAPTISM ✠

Daniel Arthur Sherouse

(Son of Oliver and Margaret Sherouse)

WELCOME BY THE CONGREGATION

We welcome you into the Lord's family. We receive you as a fellow member of the body of Christ, a child of the same heavenly Father, and worker with us in the kingdom of God.

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 God,
in Your mercy guide the course of this world so that Your Church may joyfully serve You in godly peace and quietness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, 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)

Job 38:1-11

Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind and said:

“Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?
Dress for action like a man;
I will question you, and you make it known to me.
“Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?
Tell me, if you have understanding.
Who determined its measurements—surely you know!
Or who stretched the line upon it?
On what were its bases sunk,
or who laid its cornerstone,
when the morning stars sang together
and all the sons of God shouted for joy?
“Or who shut in the sea with doors
when it burst out from the womb,
when I made clouds its garment
and thick darkness its swaddling band,
and prescribed limits for it
and set bars and doors,
and said, ‘Thus far shall you come, and no farther,
and here shall your proud waves be stayed?’”

This is the Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM 124 (Read responsively)

If it had not been the LORD who was on our side—
let Israel now say—

**if it had not been the LORD who was on our side
when people rose up against us,**

then they would have swallowed us up alive,
when their anger was kindled against us;
**then the flood would have swept us away,
the torrent would have gone over us;**

then over us would have gone
the raging waters.

**Blessèd be the LORD,
who has not given us
as prey to their teeth!**

We have escaped like a bird
from the snare of the fowlers;
the snare is broken,
and we have escaped!

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

**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 6:1-13

Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain. For he says,
“In a favorable time I listened to you,
and in a day of salvation I have helped you.”

Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation. We put no obstacle in anyone’s way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love; by truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; through honor and dishonor, through slander and praise. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing everything.

We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians; our heart is wide open. You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted in your own affections. In return (I speak as to children) widen your hearts also.

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.

GOSPEL

Mark 4:35-41

The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark the 4th chapter

Glory to You, O Lord.

On that day, when evening had come, [Jesus] said to them, "Let us go across to the other side." And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him. And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And they woke him and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. He said to them, "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?" And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even wind and sea obey him?"

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:

Every time I hear this text from the scriptures, I'm reminded of a story my mom would tell me about my childhood. She'd say: "Mark, when you were not quite four years old you heard the story of Jesus calming the storm in Sunday School, and when a thunderstorm came through that next week you went outside and loudly told it to 'stop!' – and you were pretty disappointed when it didn't."

Mom and I would always laugh at that story. And looking back, I suppose I learned a good lesson that day. I learned that I can't do what Jesus can do. And really, that's one of the main points of the text.

"Who is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" asked the disciples. Jesus was doing things they couldn't. And that no one else could either.

The disciples had seen some pretty impressive things from Jesus by this point. He had cast out evil spirits. He had healed people's illnesses. He had drawn great crowds with his teaching. He had challenged the authorities of his day and prevailed. But this miracle was at a whole new level.

The disciple's question – "who is this?" – was a natural response to what they were seeing from Jesus. But the question is also included by Mark in his Gospel to push each of us toward formulating an answer ourselves. Having heard what Jesus said and did, and having tested his teachings in our lives – not by seeing if we can do what he did but by seeing if his teachings bring forth the fruits they say they will – who do we then say that Jesus is?

The scriptures clearly show that Jesus is God himself, for he says and does the things that only God can do. When we hear of Jesus calming the storm, we are reminded of how God showed that same power in earlier scriptures. God is the one who parted the Red Sea so the children of Israel could escape their slavery in Egypt. God is the one who prepared a way through the Jordan so that Israel could enter the promised land. God is

the one who caused the great storm to prompt Jonah to return to his prophetic duties. And God is the one, as he reminded Job, who shut in the sea with doors and prescribed limits for it saying: “Thus far shall you come, and no farther, and here shall your proud waves be stayed.”

Jesus has that same power. He is Lord and God. That’s the confession of the scriptures. And of the church. And I pray, of you as well.

When Jesus is our Lord, we are relieved of the pressure of trying to do the things that only he can do. When I was a little kid, I was disappointed that I couldn’t do what Jesus did. Now I realize that there can really only be one who is in control – the one who makes the decisions about which storms to end and which to keep going, and the one who takes all the other actions needed to keep life going forward in this world marred by sin. I’m happy that Jesus is in control, not me. Not only would I be overwhelmed, but my track record of responsibility and control is not so good.

And yet, even though Jesus is in control, he also invites us to work with him. In fact, he leads us and equips us to do far more than we might think possible.

The text that we just read speaks strongly to the identity of Jesus. He is God. But it also speaks about things Jesus would like us to do.

It begins with Jesus saying to his disciples: “Let us go across to the other side.” Jesus, we see, was on a mission and he wanted the disciples to go with him. His words to them are meant to lead, guide and encourage them. “Let’s go!” he says.

So also, as Jesus goes on his mission of healing and helping people today, he invites us to go with him. Will we?

In the story, Jesus is going to the other side – meaning the other side of the Sea of Galilee. But perhaps this detail can remind us that Jesus often went to those who were seen as being on another side of life. He went to Gentiles. He spoke with women. He spent time with both the educated and uneducated, the rich and the poor, the kind and the difficult. He even spoke to sinners.

How important it is that we go with Jesus to the other side now and then – to those who might have different ideas than us and those who might be challenging to us. When we meet these people, we might be a blessing to them. Or we might be blessed by them.

When Jesus is our Lord, we have a leader and guide that invites us into mission with him. And this mission will always have challenges.

What’s more, the mission will also have risks.

The Sea of Galilee is found between mountain ranges and is susceptible to extreme and sudden weather changes as the wind comes off the mountains and swirls around the valley. The Sea is notorious for its storms and dangerous waves. But this didn’t stop Jesus. He got in the boat and took off on his mission. It was well worth the risk.

What about us? Do we attempt mission efforts that might involve risk? Or do we think it best to always play it safe?

Perhaps we forget that Jesus goes with us. Or perhaps we think that Jesus is asleep – just as he was when the great storm came up and tossed the boat of the disciples that day.

Worst of all, perhaps we think Jesus doesn't care. That's what the disciples suggested when they saw the great storm. "Don't you care?" they said to him. We might think the same thing.

But of course, Jesus does care. And he's not asleep. Jesus goes with us in the work of mission. He's with us through all of it – in its many and various forms. He goes with us when our jobs get tough. He goes with us when our family life is a challenge. He goes with us in times of illness or injury. He goes with us when life's storms arise. He's with us in all our mission callings – empowering us to handle challenges and equipping us for the work of living and spreading his word.

His sleeping in the boat that day wasn't a sign of his uncaring. It was a sign of his faith.

And that's where Jesus is leading us in this text. Jesus wants us to sleep peacefully too – meaning he wants us to have faith. To trust him. To believe in his power. He wants us to trust that he will help us during our storms. And he wants us to faithfully take the risks we need in order to cross to those other sides.

When the storm came upon the disciples, Jesus rebuked it with strong words – using the same kind of rebuke he did when casting out evil spirits. Jesus spoke with the authority of holiness and commanded the storm to be silent.

After he rebuked it, the text tells us that there was a great calm. And we should note that this is the second time the adjective "great" is used in the story. Earlier the storm was described as great. Now the calm is great.

This great calm can remind us of the great peace Jesus gives us. For Jesus not only gives the assurance of his care in our storms, but he also gives the greatest peace we could ever have – the peace that comes through the forgiveness of our sins. After his sacrificial death on the cross, and after his rising from the dead and appearing to his disciples, remember that his first words to them were "peace be with you." The peace Jesus gives is a peace between God and man borne out of forgiveness. And it is an eternal peace – one that assures we will not perish but have everlasting life.

After the wind ceased and the great calm appeared, Jesus then said to his disciples: "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?" Notice that Jesus speaks in the present tense: "Why ARE you so afraid" not "Why WERE you." That's because the disciples still don't get it. Their fear wasn't just a momentary lapse of faith during the storm. It lingered. And this is a common theme in Mark's Gospel. The disciples' faith was frequently lacking.

And yet, at the same time, Jesus' words here, and that theme of the disciples' struggle, is not meant to criticize the disciples so much as to explain the transformation which must take place. Faith is not easy. Jesus needs to push people toward it. And it may take time.

After Jesus gives his gentle rebuke to the disciples (in contrast, notice, to the great rebuke given to the storm), we are told that the disciples "were filled with great fear." And this may seem odd after Jesus just called them to stop being afraid. But here Mark is building on that idea of transformation and introducing another phenomenon which will appear many times in Jesus' ministry. Jesus' words and actions will cause fear among people. Sometimes even "great fear" (notice that third use of the adjective here!). But this fear is not a stifling kind where a person is troubled and diminished. Rather, this is a fear which indicates wonder and growth. It is a fear that points to divine activity – God working in a person's heart to cleanse, correct and inspire. It is the fear which Luther included in his explanation of the commandments, where we are taught to "fear and love God."

This fear caused the disciples to say to one another: “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?” And this fear kept them following Jesus—listening to what he said, watching what he did – until that day when they were ready to be in mission on their own.

To conclude. In this reading, Jesus reveals more of who he is and more of what he has come to do. He is the one who can calm storms. He is the one who can give calm in a storm.

Jesus teaches us to join him in mission. Jesus teaches us to risk and to trust. Jesus teaches us that he has great power. And Jesus teaches us that he also has great compassion.

He loves us like his children. And Jesus, like the eternal Father, is strong to save.

Therefore, like the wind and the waves, may we obey him. And give him glory.

In his holy name. Amen.

HYMN OF THE DAY (Stand) #725 Sts. 1, 3, 4 Children of the Heavenly Father

- 1 Children of the heav'nly Father
Safely in His bosom gather;
Nestling bird nor star in heaven
Such a refuge e'er was given.**
- 3 Neither life nor death shall ever
From the Lord His children sever;
Unto them His grace He showeth,
And their sorrows all He knoweth.**
- 4 Though He giveth or He taketh,
God His children ne'er forsaketh;
His the loving purpose solely
To preserve them pure and holy.**

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

In peace, let us pray to the Lord:

The response to each petition will be:

“let us pray to the Lord:”

“Lord, have mercy.”



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

*Children of the Heavenly Father
Setting: J. Wayne Kerr*

POST-COMMUNION COLLECT (Stand)

BENEDICTION

SENDING HYMN #717 Sts. 1-4

Eternal Father, Strong to Save

- 1 Eternal Father, strong to save,
Whose arm hath bound the restless wave,
Who bidd'st the mighty ocean deep
Its own appointed limits keep:
O hear us when we cry to Thee
For those in peril on the sea.**
- 2 O Christ, whose voice the waters heard
And hushed their raging at Thy word,
Who walkedst on the foaming deep
And calm amid its rage didst sleep:
O hear us when we cry to Thee
For those in peril on the sea.**
- 3 Most Holy Spirit, who didst brood
Upon the chaos dark and rude,
And bid its angry tumult cease,
And give, for wild confusion, peace:
O hear us when we cry to Thee
For those in peril on the sea.**
- 4 O Trinity of love and pow'r,
Our people shield in danger's hour;
From rock and tempest, fire and foe,
Protect them wheresoe'er they go;**

**Thus evermore shall rise to Thee
Glad praise from air and land and sea.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS (Be seated)

DISMISSAL

POSTLUDE

*Eternal Father, Strong to Save
Setting: J. William Greene*

Those serving:

Sunday, June 20, 8:30 a.m.:

Greeter: Jim Easterly
Comm. assist: Dede Dixon
Reader: Aaron Siebrass

10:30 a.m.:

Greeter: Steve Janssen
Comm. assist: Jill Hecht
Reader: Bill Miller

Acknowledgments

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