

6th Sunday of Easter
Mother's Day
Adaptive Worship Service
May 9, 2021



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Ministers: The People of Grace Lutheran Church

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Welcome! This Sunday's image of the life the risen Christ shares with us is the image of friendship. We are called to serve others as Jesus came to serve; but for John's gospel, the image of servanthood is too hierarchical, too distant, to capture the essence of life with Christ. Friendship captures the love, the joy, the deep mutuality of the relationship into which Christ invites us. The Greeks believed that true friends are willing to die for each other. This is the mutual love of Christian community commanded by Christ and enabled by the Spirit.

This is a special bulletin for Grace Lutheran Church. This bulletin is designed to be used at home by anyone who is baptized serving as the Worship Leader. If you use this bulletin for worship, either by itself or alongside our service on YouTube, please fill out the Attendance Record Form on our website: GraceCLW.com

ADAPTIVE SERVICE OF THE WORD

GREETING

Worship Leader: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Congregation: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

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

Congregation: Amen.

FIRST READING

Acts 10:44-48

Introduction to the lesson: *While Peter shares the good news of Jesus with a Gentile soldier and his family, the Holy Spirit comes upon them. Recognizing that the Spirit works inclusively in the lives of both Jews and Gentiles, Peter commands that these Gentiles also be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.*

Reader: 44 While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit came down on all those who were listening to his message. 45 The Jewish believers who had come from Joppa with Peter were amazed that God had poured out his gift of the Holy Spirit on the Gentiles also. 46 For they heard them speaking in strange tongues and praising God's greatness. Peter spoke up: 47 "These people have received the Holy Spirit, just as we also did. Can anyone, then, stop them from being baptized with water?" 48 So he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to stay with them for a few days.

After the reading...

Reader: The word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL LESSON

John 15:9-17

Introduction to the Gospel: *On the night of his arrest, Jesus delivers a final testimony to his disciples to help them in the days ahead. Here, he repeats the most important of all his commands, that they love one another.*

Worship Leader: The Holy Gospel according to John in the 15th chapter.

Congregation: Glory to you, O Lord.

Worship Leader: 9 I love you just as the Father loves me; remain in my love. 10 If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love.

11 “I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. 12 My commandment is this: love one another, just as I love you. 13 The greatest love you can have for your friends is to give your life for them. 14 And you are my friends if you do what I command you. 15 I do not call you servants any longer, because servants do not know what their master is doing. Instead, I call you friends, because I have told you everything I heard from my Father. 16 You did not choose me; I chose you and appointed you to go and bear much fruit, the kind of fruit that endures. And so the Father will give you whatever you ask of him in my name. 17 This, then, is what I command you: love one another.

After the reading...

Worship Leader: The gospel of the Lord.

Congregation: Praise to you, O Christ.

GOSPEL MESSAGE—From Sundays and Seasons

Eternal, Unconditional, and Unchanging

To abide is to put down roots: to dwell in the same location and with the same people for the long term. Unlike in Jesus' time, today few of us live in the same place in which we were born. Families are routinely scattered across the country and around the world. Yet Jesus invites us, “Abide in my love” (John 15:9). While so much else in our lives seems impermanent, Jesus' love is eternal, unconditional, and unchanging.

In today's gospel, Jesus is on his way to the cross. Pressed for time and filled with urgency, he can convey only the most important message. Of all the subjects he has explored during his ministry, he chooses to emphasize that which matters most: his own love. Jesus knows that love is eternal, that it transcends death and the grave. He knows

that love is essential, that it must be at the core of our being. He knows that love is the embodiment of all his teachings, healings, and ministry.

Jesus knows that Judas has already betrayed him. He knows that shortly, Peter will deny him. In preaching love, he shows us that the sort of love he has for each of us is stronger than our own very human shortcomings—and that his love for us, and for his disciples, is forever. As followers of Jesus, we are charged with loving one another with the unconditional, eternal love that he has for us. In a world of change, such a responsibility is challenging, yet living out that challenge is what gives our lives purpose.

The secret to love is that it puts others first. Love is the only emotion that can defeat our instinctive self-centeredness. In charging us to love one another, Jesus issues an invitation to be awake and aware, to see others as beloved children of God, and to reflect divine love back onto everyone we encounter. In this way, Jesus lives in each of us.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

Jesus Loves Me

vs. 1-3

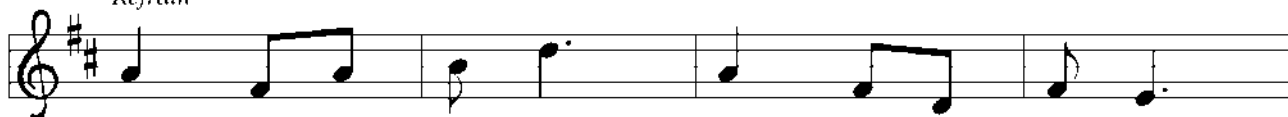


1 Je - sus loves me! this I know, for the Bi - ble tells me so;
2 Je - sus loves me! he who died heav - en's gates to o - pen wide;
3 Je - sus loves me! he will stay close be - side me all the way;



lit - tle ones to him be - long, they are weak, but he is strong.
he will wash a - way my sin, let his lit - tle child come in.
when at last I come to die, he will take me home on high.

Refrain



Yes, Je - sus loves me, yes, Je - sus loves me,



yes, Je - sus loves me, the Bi - ble tells me so.

Text: Anna B. Warner, 1820–1915, alt.

Music: JESUS LOVES ME. William B. Bradbury, 1816–1868

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Worship Leader: Alive in the risen Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, we bring our prayers before God who promises to hear us and answer in steadfast love.

Prayer Leader: Loving God, you call us to be your fruit-bearing church. Strengthen the bonds among all Christian churches. Today we pray for the Moravian Church, giving thanks for the life and witness of Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf, renewer of the church and hymnwriter. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: Caring Healer, you forget no one and accompany the lonely. Be present with those who are sick or suffering (especially Marc Calhoun, Linda Almond, Barbara Haseley, Duke Tieman, Betty Biddle, Cathi Adams, Michael Morales, Wade Buehler, Gloria Holtzclaw, Betty Daege, Dianne William, Rosemarie & George Smith, Gary Neal, Karen Bates, Rev. Lydia Villanueva and family, Don Eunis, Lorraine Reinhard, Bonnie Redler, Kathy Leotta, Brytt Mathis, Joseph Valentin, Rita Burneik, Bobby Schlegel, Hilda Taylor, George Clark, Jill Grote, Larry Timmons, Carl Stone, Neftali Garcia & family, Susan Gunn, Roy Pruitt, Iris Valentin, Deacon Connie Puls, Joan Keeton, Steve Davis, Rose Marie Piff, Gary Mostrum, Vicki Kennedy, Gail Elder, Valerie Smutko, Jason Meadows, Lisa & Ty Hauschild, Bishop Pedro Suarez, Pastor Courtney Erzkus and family, Ralph Burson, Ellen Duncan, Luanne Sekel, Lorraine Chavez, Pat Fredell, Skylar Favos, Audrey Fisher, the family and friends of Kelly Sullivan, and all those suffering from natural disasters [including all those impacted by COVID-19 and other natural disasters], violence, & terror, and the family & friends of the 550,000+ people in the US & the 2.8 million+ people worldwide who have died from COVID-19).). Provide for those needing homes or medical care and point us towards life-changing responses to these needs in our own communities. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

THE BLESSING OF WOMEN

Worship Leader: O God of the Resurrection, you made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your Son. Look with compassion on the whole human family, but especially this day we ask your blessing on these women gathered here.

Prayer Leader: Almighty God, with a mother's love and a father's care you have blessed some with the joy and responsibility of children. Today we bless those women here and throughout the world who are mothers and pray that you give them gracious love, calm strength, and patient wisdom, that they may teach those under their care to love whatever is just and true and good and that through them their children and the world as

a whole may encounter your unconditional love, following the example of our Savior Jesus Christ. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: Triune God, whose will it is that humans live in community, bless family life everywhere and fill all homes with respect, joy, laughter, and prayer. Strengthen the commitment of all spouses to one another, that they may mirror your covenant faithfulness. Give strength and wisdom to single moms who shoulder the trials of parenthood alone. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: Pour out your Spirit on all women who are a mothering and nurturing presence for children and our community, such as mothers who have adopted their children, foster mothers, women serving as guardians, and on any who serve as a mother figure in any capacity. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: God of Peace, may you comfort those who find this day to be difficult due to a loss of a child or their mother, strained relationships between mother and offspring, because they have not been able to have children, or for any other reason.

Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: God of All, for the sake of the whole world may you take away the arrogance and hatred that too often infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of love; and, through our struggle and confusion, work to accomplish your purposes on earth; so that, in your good time, every people and nation may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Worship Leader: Receive these prayers, O God, and those too deep for words; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Congregation: Amen.

OFFERING

Offerings to the mission and ministry of Grace can be made online at GraceCLW.com (look for the "Donate" button), or (for now) by mailing a check to Grace Lutheran Church, 1812 N. Highland Ave. Clearwater FL 33755. Thank you for your continued financial support during these uncertain times. You can fill out your attendance form on our website as well.

OFFERING PRAYER

Prayer Leader: Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Congregation: Amen.

THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

Worship Leader: Let us pray. O God of justice and love, we give thanks to you that you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, awaken us to the needs of others, and at the end bring all the world to your feast; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever.

Congregation: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Worship Leader: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray in the language closest to our hearts.

Congregation: 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.

BLESSING

Worship Leader: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace .

Congregation: Amen.

SENDING SONG

The Doxology

Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise him, all
crea - tures here be - low; praise him a - bove, ye



Text: Thomas Ken, 1637–1711

Music: OLD HUNDREDTH, Louis Bourgeois, 1510–1561

DISMISSAL

Pastor: Together we have heard God’s Word and joined in prayer, we have given and have been forgiven. Now our service of worship has ended, and our service to the world begins! Go in peace. Be the light of Christ.

Congregation: Thanks be to God!

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