

THE SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

9 May 2021

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.

Today the Church remembers Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf, renewer of the Church, hymnwriter, d. 1760.

+ GATHERING +

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism.

P. We are gathered in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C. Amen.

P. Rejoicing in the resurrection, let us seek God's forgiveness, that dying to sin, we may walk in newness of life.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P. Loving God,

C. we fear, we doubt, we do not trust You; we do not love our neighbors as ourselves; we have failed to recognize You in the poor and needy; we sin against you in thought, word, and deed. We pray for Your mercy, forgiveness, and grace. We hope in the gift of Your Spirit and we rejoice in the resurrection promise of Jesus Christ, our living Savior. Amen.

P. God, Who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin and made us alive with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of + Jesus Christ, crucified and risen, I declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins. May you be strengthened daily with the power to walk in God's light and love.

C. Amen.

GREETING

P. Alleluia! Christ is risen!

C. Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

P. The grace of our risen Savior, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C. And also with you.

HYMN OF PRAISE

This is the Feast of Victory for Our God

Pastor:



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia.

Congregation:



1 Wor-thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us



free to be peo-ple of God. Pow - er and rich - es and wis - dom and



strength, and hon - or and bless-ing and glo - ry are his.

Refrain



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia.



2 Sing with all the peo - ple of God and join in the



hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless-ing and hon - or and glo - ry and



might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.

Final refrain

This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain
has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P. 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.

C. Amen

+ WORD +

FIRST READING: Acts 10:44–48

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.

While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word. ⁴⁵The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles, ⁴⁶for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter said, ⁴⁷“Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?” ⁴⁸So he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they invited him to stay for several days.

The Word of the Lord.

C. Thanks be to God.

PSALM 98

Sing to the LORD a new song,
for He has done marvelous things.

²With His right hand and holy arm
Has He won for Himself the victory.

³The LORD has made known His victory;
His righteousness has He openly shown
in the sight of the nations.

⁴He remembers His mercy and faithfulness to the house of Israel,
and all the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God.

⁵Shout with joy to the LORD, all you lands;
lift up your voice, rejoice, and sing.
⁶Sing to the LORD with the harp,
with the harp and the voice of song.
⁷With trumpets and the sound of the horn
shout with joy before the king, the LORD.
⁸Let the sea make a noise, and all that is in it,
the lands and those who dwell therein.
⁹Let the rivers clap their hands,
and let the hills ring out with joy before the LORD,
when He comes to judge the earth.
¹⁰In righteousness shall He judge the world
and the peoples with equity.

SECOND READING: 1 John 5:1–6

God's children believe that Jesus is the Messiah and love God by keeping God's commandments. Thus the world is conquered not through military might but through love and faith.

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the parent loves the child. ²By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey His commandments. ³For the love of God is this, that we obey His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome, ⁴for whatever is born of God conquers the world. And this is the victory that conquers the world, our faith. ⁵Who is it that conquers the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

⁶This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ, not with the water only but with the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one that testifies, for the Spirit is the truth.

The Word of the Lord.
C. Thanks be to God.

HOLY GOSPEL: St. John 15:9–17

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.

C. Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said:] “As the Father has loved Me, so I have loved you; abide in My love. ¹⁰If you keep My commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in His love. ¹¹I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

¹²“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. ¹⁴You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known

to you everything that I have heard from my Father. ¹⁶You did not choose Me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask Him in My name. ¹⁷I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.”

P. The Gospel of the Lord.
 C. Praise to you, O Christ

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

Jesu, Jesu Fill Us with Your Love

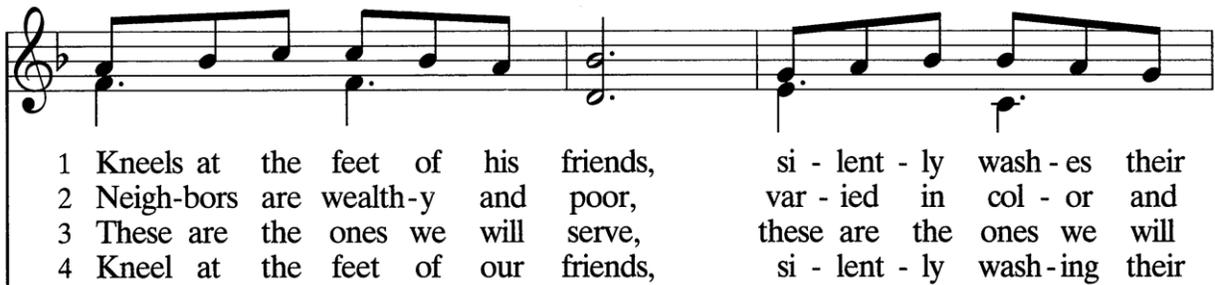
Refrain



Je - su, Je - su, fill us with your love, show

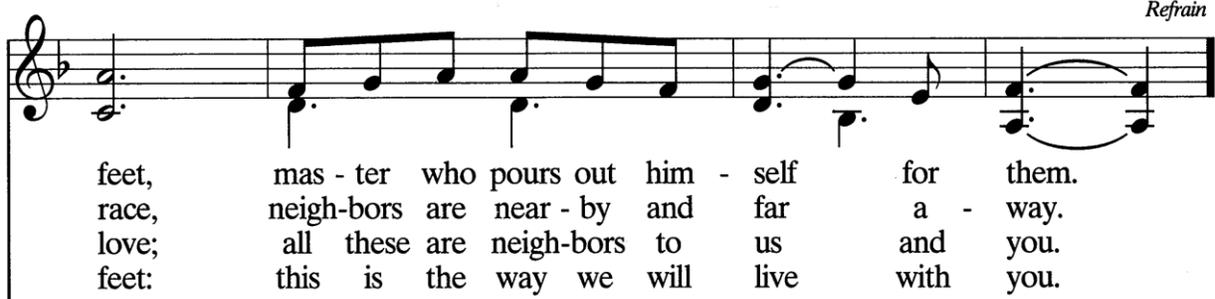


us how to serve the neigh-bors we have from you.



1 Kneels at the feet of his friends, si - lent - ly wash - es their
 2 Neigh-bors are wealth-y and poor, var - ied in col - or and
 3 These are the ones we will serve, these are the ones we will
 4 Kneel at the feet of our friends, si - lent - ly wash - ing their

Refrain



feet, mas - ter who pours out him - self for them.
 race, neigh-bors are near - by and far a - way.
 love; all these are neigh-bors to us and you.
 feet: this is the way we will live with you.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit,
and born of the virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell.
On the third day He rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again 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.

✠ THE BLESSING OF THE ROGATION ELEMENTS ✠

P. The words of the LORD are like rain on the earth,
C. where muddy furrows sprout and grow.

P. Even our land is filled with God's glory,
C. the soil is alive with creative power.

P. To be sure, the LORD will yield all that is good
C. and our land will yield a harvest.

P. God has spoken the future - Righteousness goes before the LORD
C. and makes a road to our hearts, sustaining us with peace.

P. For thousands of years, believers have gathered to seek the blessing of God at the time of spring planting so that the earth might sustain their lives and grow their families. Today we participate in this ancient ritual with new perspectives and experiences while still acknowledging our dependence on the gifts of the Creator for our survival. In addition to the three traditional elements of seed, soil, and water, we add human industry, also a gift from God, whose importance to agriculture is more connected than ever.

Prayer for the Soil

P. Creating God, out of the ground You formed living things. We give You thanks for the creative power that covers the earth and for the new life it births each spring. We thank You for the feel of mud between our toes, for the smell of black earth, and for the intricate cycles of life that never cease beneath the surface. Bless this soil and all soil that is planted or grazed. Empower us to be wise stewards of its use and protectors of its fertility. In the name of the one who gives us new life, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Prayer for the Seed

P. Author of Life, in Your wisdom, You speak creation into being through every seed, every flower, every spore. Nourish and protect these seeds and all seeds so that the mystery of resurrection might once again sprout and grow to yield a harvest of abundance for all people. Teach us again the profound mystery of planting in faith, caring with love, for the hope of harvest. Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C. **Amen.**

Prayer for the Water

P. We give You thanks, O God, for in the beginning Your Spirit moved over the waters and in the waters of baptism, You wash away our sin and call us to new life. We praise You for the rain that refreshes the earth, for the sweet satisfaction of cold water on a hot summer day, and for the moisture that sustains both plants and animals. We pray, Lord, that the rains would come when they are needed so that crops will thrive and the harvest will be abundant. In the name of Christ our Lord.

C. **Amen**

Prayer for Human Industry

P. Loving God, in Your image You created humanity, male and female You created them. You have gifted us with minds that are capable of dreaming, building, exploring, and discovering. We have designed machines that ease our burdens and increase our abilities. We have uncovered some of the mysteries of life. Bless us and guide us, O Lord, so that we may wisely use the gifts of science and reason in the service of all creation and not just for selfish ends. We dedicate all agricultural equipment and technology, along with those who create it, to Your purpose and ask that You grant protection and safety to those who use it. Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C. **Amen**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Rejoicing in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we pray for the witness of the Church, the wholeness of creation, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

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, renew of the church and hymnwriter. Lord, in Your mercy,

C. hear our prayer.

Creating God,, the earth praises You. The seas make noise and the hills sing for joy. Fill the earth with Your love so that by their song all creatures of land and sea and sky may call us to join with them in praise. Lord, in Your mercy,

C. hear our prayer.

Faithful Savior, You conquer the world not with the weapons but with undying love. Plant Your word in the hearts of the nations' leaders and give them Your Spirit, so that the peoples of the world may live in peace. Lord, in Your mercy,

C. hear our prayer.

Caring Healer, You forget no one and accompany the lonely. Be present with those who are sick or suffering, especially for Emily, Angie, Shirlee, Bill and Karen Pohlen, Bill Ningen, Carol, Sylvia and Jim, Muriel, and Norma. 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,

C. hear our prayer.

Gracious God, as a mother comforts her child, You comfort us. Bless mothers and mothering people in our lives. Comfort those who miss their mothers, mothers who grieve, those who grieve because they cannot be mother, and those who have never known a loving mother. Lord, in Your mercy,

C. hear our prayer.

Gentle Redeemer, all who die in You abide in Your presence forever. We remember with thanksgiving those who shared Your love throughout their lives. Keep us united with them in Your lasting love. Lord, in Your mercy,

C. hear our prayer.

We entrust all our prayers to You, gracious God. Receive them by the power of the Holy Spirit and the love of Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C. Amen.

SHARING THE PEACE OF THE LORD

OFFERING/ OFFERTORY

He Is Arisen, Glorious Word

Lord; The gates of heav'n are o - pen. My Je - sus rose tri -
um-phant-ly, And Sa-tan's ar - rows bro-ken lie, De-stroyed hell's
fierc - est weap - on. Oh, hear, what cheer! Christ vic - to - rious, Ris - ing
glo-rious, Life is giv - ing. He was dead, but now is liv - ing!

OFFERTORY PRAYER

P Blessed are You, O God, ruler of heaven and earth.

C. Day by day You shower us with blessings. As You raised us to new life in Christ, give us glad and generous hearts, ready to praise You and to respond to those in need through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

+ MEAL +

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

P. The Lord be with you. C. And also with you.

P. Lift up your hearts. C. We lift them to the Lord.

P. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C. It is right to give God thanks and praise.

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

P. Holy, living and loving God ... gave His life for the world.

C. Amen.

P. **In the night in** ... the Lord's death until He comes.

C. **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

P. Breathe Your Spirit, ... both now and forever.

C. Amen.

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.

DISTRIBUTION

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

P. The Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His grace.

C. Amen.

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

P. Life-giving God, in the mystery of Christ's resurrection You send light to conquer darkness, water to give new life, and the bread of life to nourish Your people. Send us forth as witnesses of Your Son's resurrection, that we may show Your glory to all the world, through Jesus Christ our risen Lord. C. Amen

+ SENDING +

BENEDICTION

P. May the glorious resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord bring you all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope. Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

C. Amen

CLOSING HYMN

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice and Sing



1 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice and sing! Now is the tri - umph
 2 The Lord of life is ris'n this day; death's might - y stone is
 3 Praise we in songs of vic - to - ry that love, that life which
 4 Your name we bless, O ris - en Lord, and sing to - day with



of our king! To all the world glad news we bring:
 rolled a - way; let all the earth re - joice and say:
 can - not die, and sing with hearts up - lift - ed high:
 one ac - cord, the life laid down, the life re - stored:



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

DISMISSAL

P. Christ is Risen!

C. He is Risen indeed!

P. Go in peace and share the good news.

C. Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia!

Those who Serve:

Ministers: All the People of God Presiding: Pastor Munter

Organist: Lou Knutson Reader: Linda Bruns

Camera: Josh Sumption Projection: James Kamrath/Kendon Knutson

Sound Room: Ken Jeremiason and Jerome Bruns

How to reach us:

Church Office: 507-296-4658

Pastor's House: 507-296-4558

Pastor's Cell: 507-828-1000 (call or text)

Pastor's email: pastormunter@gmail.com

Bethel email: bethel@bethelofporter.com

Bethel web page: www.bethelofporter.com



Emily Morton, Angie Denelsbeck Anderson
Shirlee Gabbert, Bill and Karen Pohlen
Bill Ningen, Carol Moon, Sylvia & Jim Pridal, Norma Dovre
Muriel Wadsworth

May 2, 2021

General: \$1,979.50 (\$129.50 received through eGiving)

Rogationtide



The word “rogation” come from the Latin *rogare*, which means “to ask,” and the Rogation Days are four days set apart to bless the fields, and ask for God’s mercy on all of creation. April 25 (coincidentally the Feast of St. Mark) is called the Major Rogation; the three days preceding Ascension Thursday are called the Minor Rogations. On these days, the congregation used to march the boundaries of the parish, blessing every tree and stone, while chanting or reciting a Litany of Mercy, usually a Litany of the Saints. A few still do.

The Rogation Days were first instituted in the 5th Century by Mamertus, bishop of Vienne in France from 461 to 475. His time as bishop was marked by near-continuous disaster. In the space of a single year – around AD 470 – a fire destroyed the king’s palace, a pestilence killed the cattle, the populace was terrorized by attacks of hungry wolves, and there were earthquakes.

In response, Mamertus led his flock in three days of prayer and procession leading up to the feast of the Ascension. He is reported to have said. “We shall pray to God that He will turn away the plagues from us, and preserve us from all ill, from hail and drought, fire and pestilence, and from the fury of our enemies; to give us favorable seasons, that our land may be fertile, good weather and good health, and that we may have peace and tranquility, and obtain pardon for our sins.” The disasters ended. Other bishops in the region quickly adopted the same practice. In AD 511, the Fifth Council of Orleans made the three days of prayer mandatory in France. In the 9th Century, Pope Leo III extended the practice to the entire church. Over the centuries, it became the custom to also use the procession to “beat the bounds” – to mark and establish the boundaries of the parish – while also blessing the trees, stones and fields. Rogationtide is a time to be reminded of the obligations to be good stewards of God’s creation.

- Carl Fortunato (www.liturgies.net/Rogation/RogationArticle.htm)

Prayers for Rogationtide

Monday – For Fruitful Seasons

Almighty God, Lord of heaven and earth. We pray that You may give and preserve to our use the harvests of the land and of the seas, and may prosper all who labor to gather them, that we, who constantly receive good things from Your hand may always give You thanks; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Tuesday – For Commerce and Industry

Almighty God, Your Son Jesus Christ in His earthly life shared our work and hallowed our labor. Be present with Your people where they work; make those who carry on the industries and commerce of this land responsive to Your will; and give to us all a pride in what we do, and a just return for our labor; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Wednesday – For Stewardship of Creation

O merciful Creator, Your hand is open wide to satisfy the needs of every living creature. Make us always thankful for Your loving providence; and grant that we, remembering the account we must one day give, may be faithful stewards of Your good gifts; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

From the Book of Common Prayer, 1977