

Holy Eucharist

June 18, 2023

Zoom link:

<https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/85887946777?pwd=ei94MEdsMUh6clV6b2dUblFOQ3I2Zz0>

9

Meeting ID: 858 8794 6777

Passcode: 782611

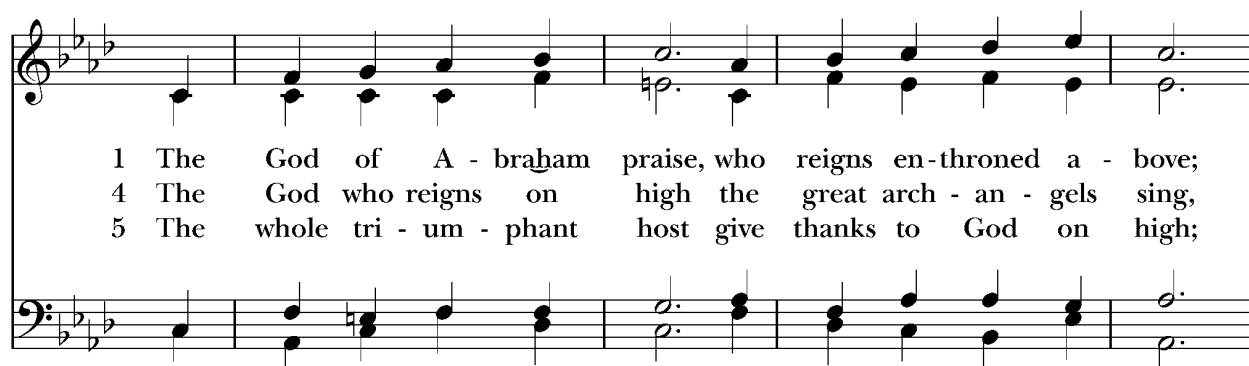
Proper 6A: the 3rd Sunday after Pentecost

Prelude

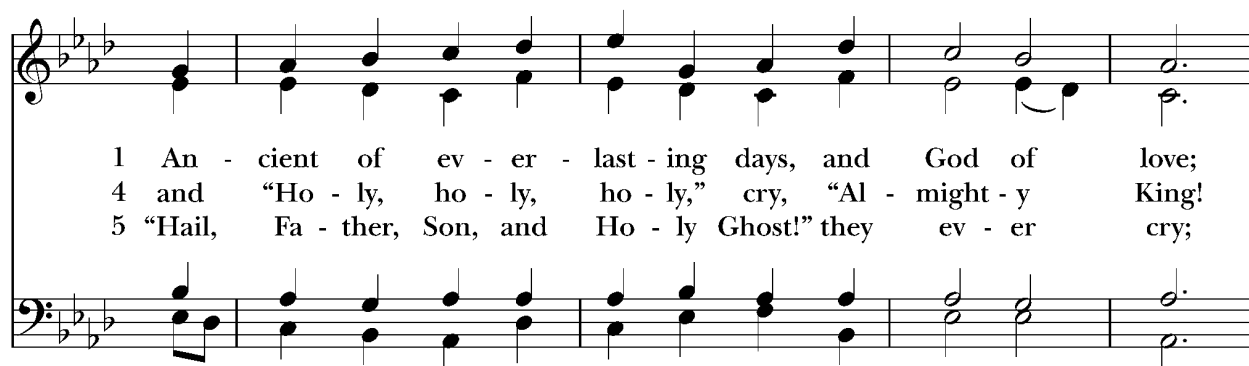
Opening Hymn

The God of Abraham praise

Hymnal 401



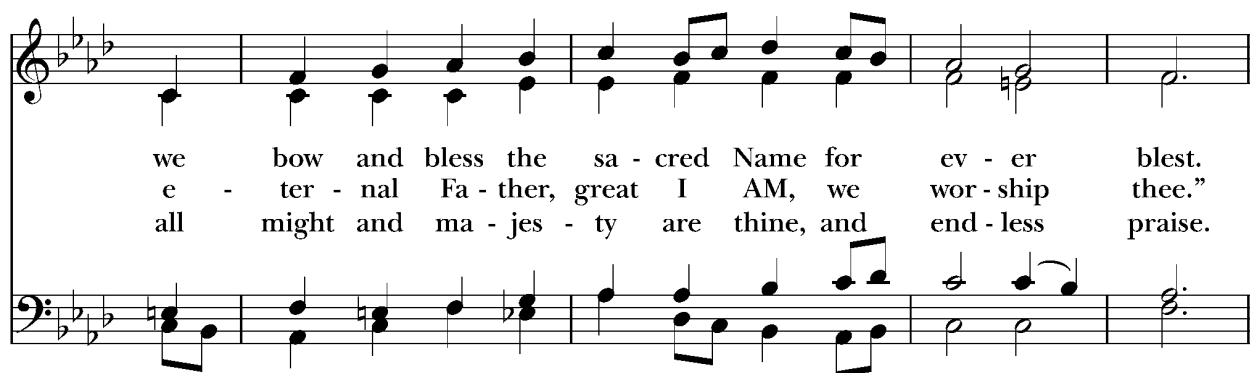
1 The God of A - braham praise, who reigns en - throned a - bove;
4 The God who reigns on high the great arch - an - gels sing,
5 The whole tri - um - phant host give thanks to God on high;



1 An - cient of ev - er - last - ing days, and God of love;
4 and "Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly," cry, "Al - might - y King!
5 "Hail, Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost!" they ev - er cry;



1 the Lord, the great I AM, by earth and heaven con - fessed:
4 Who was, and is, the same, and ev - er - more shall be:
5 hail, A - braham's Lord di - vine! With heaven our songs we raise;



we bow and bless the sa - cred Name for ev - er blest.
 e - ter - nal Fa - ther, great I AM, we wor - ship thee."
 all might and ma - jes - ty are thine, and end - less praise.

Presider Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
People **And blessed be God's reign, now and for ever. Amen.**

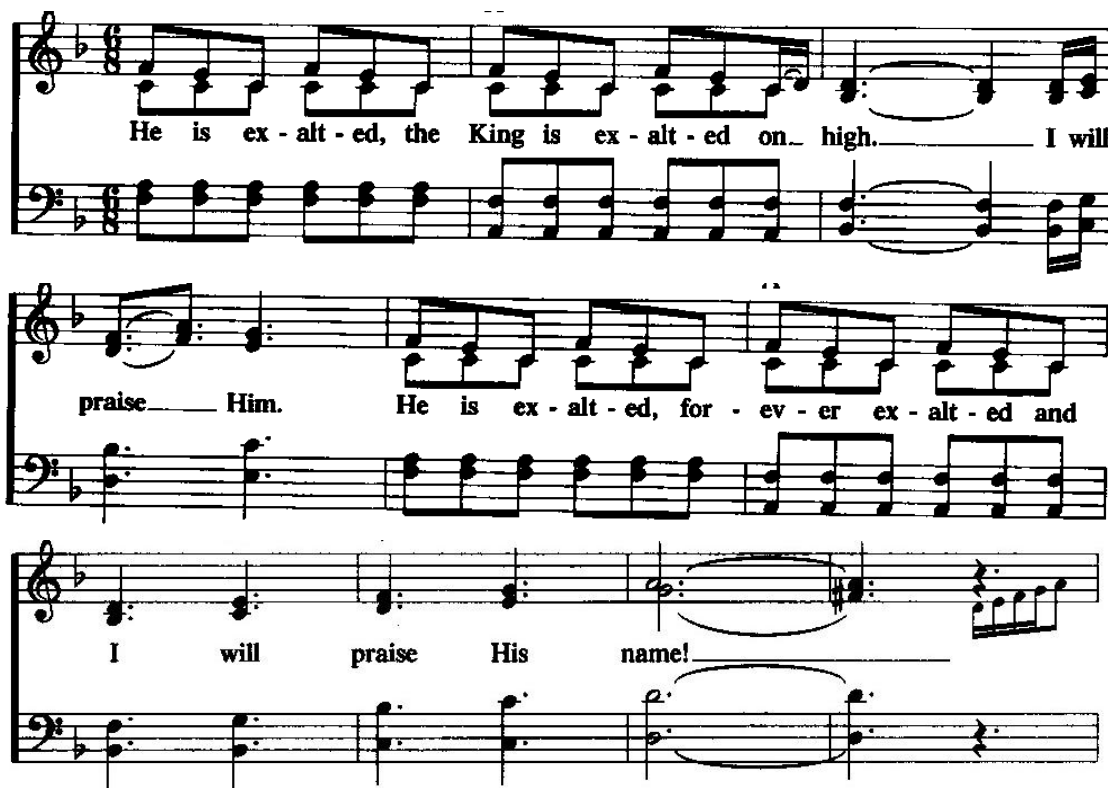
The Presider begins the Collect for Purity

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid:
Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The following is sung, all standing as they are able

Song of Praise
He is exalted

Chorus Book 7



He is ex - alt - ed, the King is ex - alt - ed on high. I will
 praise Him. He is ex - alt - ed, for - ev - er ex - alt - ed and
 I will praise His name!

I will praise His name!

He is the Lord. For - ev - er His truth shall

reign. Heav - en and earth re -

joice in His ho - ly name. He is ex - alt - ed, the

King is ex - alt - ed on high.

Collect of the Day

Presider The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider Let us pray.

Keep, O Lord, your household the Church in your steadfast faith and love, that through your grace we may proclaim your truth with boldness, and minister your justice with compassion; for the sake of our Savior Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

All sit.

First Reading

Genesis 18:1-15 [21:1-7]

A Reading from the book of Genesis.

¹The LORD appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day. ²He looked up and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent entrance to meet them, and bowed down to the ground. ³He said, "My lord, if I find favor with you, do not pass by your servant. ⁴Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. ⁵Let me bring a little bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have come to your servant." So they said, "Do as you have said." ⁶And Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, "Make ready quickly three measures of choice flour, knead it, and make cakes." ⁷Abraham ran to the herd, and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to the servant, who hastened to prepare it. ⁸Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree while they ate.

⁹They said to him, "Where is your wife Sarah?" And he said, "There, in the tent." ¹⁰Then one said, "I will surely return to you in due season, and your wife Sarah shall have a son." And Sarah was listening at the tent entrance behind him. ¹¹Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; it had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. ¹²So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, "After I have grown old, and my husband is old, shall I have pleasure?" ¹³The LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, and say, 'Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old?' ¹⁴Is anything too wonderful for the LORD? At the set time I will return to you, in due season, and Sarah shall have a son." ¹⁵But Sarah denied, saying, "I did not laugh"; for she was afraid. He said, "Oh yes, you did laugh." [¹The LORD dealt with Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did for Sarah as he had promised. ²Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the time of which God had spoken to him. ³Abraham gave the name Isaac to his son whom Sarah bore him. ⁴And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him. ⁵Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. ⁶Now Sarah said, "God has brought laughter for me; everyone who hears will laugh with me." ⁷And she said, "Who would ever have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age."]

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 116:1, 10-17

to be prayed in unison

**¹I love the LORD, because he has heard the voice of my supplication, *
because he has inclined his ear to me whenever I called upon him.**

**¹⁰How shall I repay the LORD *
for all the good things God has done for me?**

**¹¹I will lift up the cup of salvation *
and call upon the Name of the LORD.**

¹²I will fulfill my vows to the LORD *

in the presence of all God's people.
¹³Precious in the sight of the LORD *
 is the death of his servants.
¹⁴O LORD, I am your servant; *
 I am your servant and the child of your handmaid;
 you have freed me from my bonds.
¹⁵I will offer you the sacrifice of thanksgiving *
 and call upon the Name of the LORD.
¹⁶I will fulfill my vows to the LORD *
 in the presence of all God's people,
¹⁷In the courts of the LORD's house, *
 in the midst of you, O Jerusalem.
 Hallelujah!

Second Reading

Romans 5:1-8

A Reading from Paul's letter to the Church in Rome.

¹Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ²through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. ³And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

⁶For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. ⁸But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

All stand as they are able.

Sequence Hymn

LEVAS 161

Go preach my gospel

1. "Go — preach my gos - pel," saith the Lord, "Bid —
 2. "I'll — make my great — com - mis - sion known, And —
 4. "While — thus ye fol - low my com - mands, I'm —
 5. He — spake and light — shone round His head, On —

1. the whole earth— my grace re - ceive, Ex - plain to them my
 2. ye shall prove— my gos - pel true By all the works that
 4. with you till— the world shall end. All pow'r is trust - ed
 5. a bright cloud— to heav'n He rode. They to the far - thest

1. sa - cred word, Bid— them be - lieve, o - bey, and live.”
 2. I have done, And— all the won - ders ye shall do.”
 4. in my hands; I— can de - stroy, and can de - fend.”
 5. na - tion spread The— grace of their as - cend - ed God.

All remain standing as they are able.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 9:35--10:8 [9-23]

Gospeller The Holy Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

³⁵Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and curing every disease and every sickness. ³⁶When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; ³⁸therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”

^{10:1}Then Jesus summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness. ²These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon, also known as Peter, and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; ³Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; ⁴Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed him.

⁵These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: “Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, ⁶but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. ⁷As you go, proclaim the good news, “The kingdom of heaven has come near.’ ⁸Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. You received without payment; give



without payment. ⁹Take no gold, or silver, or copper in your belts, ¹⁰no bag for your journey, or two tunics, or sandals, or a staff; for laborers deserve their food. ¹¹Whatever town or village you enter, find out who in it is worthy, and stay there until you leave. ¹²As you enter the house, greet it. ¹³If the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. ¹⁴If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet as you leave that house or town. ¹⁵Truly I tell you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town.

¹⁶“See, I am sending you out like sheep into the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. ¹⁷Beware of them, for they will hand you over to councils and flog you in their synagogues; ¹⁸and you will be dragged before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them and the Gentiles. ¹⁹When they hand you over, do not worry about how you are to speak or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given to you at that time; ²⁰for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. ²¹Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; ²²and you will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. ²³When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next; for truly I tell you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.”]

Gospeller The Gospel of the Lord.
People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

Sermon

Rob Hampton

All stand as they are able.

Nicene Creed

Presider Let us affirm the faith of the Church using the words of the Nicene Creed.

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**
**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**
**For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father [and the Son],
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

All remain standing as they are able.

Prayers of the People

Presider Brothers and sisters, children of God, worship the Lord with gladness. Let us pray, with joyful hearts, “We give you thanks! We bless your name!”

Intercessor O Lord, you are good; while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Send us out to share your love. Send your Church out to gather in a plentiful harvest. “We give you thanks! **We bless your name!**”

Silence is kept

O Lord, you are good; your faithfulness endures to all generations. To those who suffer, give hope. And visit the lonely with your peace. “We give you thanks! **We bless your name!**”

Silence is kept

O Lord, you are good; all the earth praises you with joyful noise. And we join the song of creation: you are worthy to be praised! “We give you thanks! **We bless your name!**”

Silence is kept

O Lord, you are good; you offer us your peace. We pray, Jesus, in thanksgiving for the blessings you give us [especially _____]. We pray that you would go about our city, speaking a word of good news and healing. “We give you thanks! **We bless your name!**”

Silence is kept

O Lord, you are good; while we were still weak, Christ died for us. Touch us in our weakness even now. And heal those afflicted with disease or sickness [especially _____]. “We give you thanks! **We bless your name!**”

O Lord, you are good; hope placed in you does not disappoint. We pray for those who have died [especially_____]. We hope for the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. “We give you thanks! **We bless your name!**”

Silence is kept

Presider For what other people and situations shall we pray today?

Almighty God, by your Holy Spirit you have made us one with your saints in heaven and on earth: Grant that in our earthly pilgrimage we may always be supported by this fellowship of love and prayer, and know ourselves to be surrounded by their witness to your power and mercy. We ask this for the sake of Jesus Christ, in whom all our intercessions are acceptable through the Spirit, and who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Confession of Sin

The Presider says to the people

Let us confess our sins to God.

All remain standing, or kneel, as they are able.

Silence may be kept.

Minister and People

**God of all mercy,
we confess that we have sinned against you,
opposing your will in our lives.
We have denied your goodness in each other,
in ourselves, and in the world you have created.
We repent of the evil that enslaves us,
the evil we have done,
and the evil done on our behalf.
Forgive, restore, and strengthen us
through our Savior Jesus Christ,
that we may abide in your love
and serve only your will. Amen.**

A Priest stands and says

Almighty God have mercy on you, + forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

All stand as they are able

Peace

Presider The peace of Christ be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

Then the Ministers and the People may greet one another in the name of the Lord.

The People then are seated.

Announcements

Holy Communion

Presider Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and make good your vows to the Most High.

The people stand as they are able when the offerings are presented and placed on the Altar.

Offertory Hymn

Doxology

**Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, you heav'nly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.**

The people remain standing as they are able

Great Thanksgiving

Presider The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider Lift up your hearts.

People **We lift them to the Lord.**

Presider Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

The Presider proceeds

Trinity of grace and love, we thank and praise you, for you purposed before the foundation of the world to open the circle of your dance of delight to include even us, and you shaped your very life to incorporate us in your dance forever.

While we were yet sinners, Christ not only came among us but died at our hands.

In the glory of his resurrection, he called ones like us to be his apostles, and spread the good news of his mercy to all the world.

And so with apostles and saints and angels and every creature in whose heart your song is sung, we join our voices in your eternal praise.

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

The Presider continues

Abiding God, in three visitors you appeared to Abraham in the heat of the day, and before him you broke bread and made your glorious purpose known.

Come among your people today ✝ that in the sharing of food we may be made bearers of your covenant of grace.

Send your Holy Spirit ✝ on the bread that we break and the cup that we share, that they may be for us the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ;

who, at supper with his disciples, took bread, gave you thanks, broke the bread, and gave it to them, saying,

"Take, eat: this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup.

Again he gave you thanks, and gave it to his disciples, saying,

"Drink this, all of you: this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

Great is the mystery of faith:

Presider and People

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

The Presider continues

Sustaining God, as your servant Paul, and his Lord Christ before him, suffered and endured, strengthen your church and hasten your kingdom through the witness of your people under persecution.

When your children are oppressed, give them courage to endure. When they find strength to endure, produce in them character to reflect your truth.

When they develop character, manifest in them hope of your deliverance.

When they grow in hope, do not disappoint them, but roll down justice like a never-failing stream, until that day when a new heaven and a new earth engulf the longings of your aching people, God of eternity. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. **AMEN.**

The Presider then continues

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray:

**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.**

Breaking of the Bread

A period of silence is kept.

The Presider says

God of promise, you have prepared a banquet for us.
Happy are those who are called to the Supper of the Lamb.

The Gifts of God for the People of God.

All are welcome to receive Holy Communion.

Remaining seated, the following is sung after the table has been cleared.

Communion Hymn *sing through twice*
Give thanks to the Lord

LEVAS 93

Give thanks to the Lord for He is so good, His mer-cy en-

1. dures for - ev - er. (for - ev - er.) Give dures for - ev - er. (for -

2. dures for - ev - er. (for -

Fine

ev - er.)

After Communion, the Presider says

Let us pray.

Presider and People

**Eternal God, heavenly Father,
 you have graciously accepted us as living members
 of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ,
 and you have fed us with spiritual food
 in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood.
 Send us now into the world in peace,
 and grant us strength and courage
 to love and serve you
 with gladness and singleness of heart;
 through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Blessing

A priest blesses the people, saying

May God the Father, by whose love Christ was raised from the dead, open to you who believe the gates of everlasting life. Amen.

May God the Son who, in bursting the grave, has won a glorious victory, give you joy as you share the Easter faith. Amen.

May God the Holy Spirit, whom the ascended Lord breathed into his disciples, empower you and fill you with Christ's peace. Amen.

And the blessing of God Almighty, + the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever. Amen.

Closing Hymn

Hymnal 539

O Zion, haste

O Zi - on, haste, thy mis - sion high ful - fill - ing,
Pro - claim to ev - ery peo - ple, tongue, and na - tion
Send her - alds forth to bear the mes - sage glo - rious;
He comes a - gain! O Zi - on, ere thou meet him,

to tell to all the world that God is Light;
that God, in whom they live and move, is Love:
give of thy wealth to speed them on their way;
make known to ev - ery heart his sav - ing grace;

The musical score consists of two systems of music. Each system has a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is common time (C). The lyrics are printed below the vocal line.

that he who made all na - tions is not will - ing
 tell how he stooped to save his lost cre - a - tion,
 pour out thy soul for them in prayer vic - to - rious
 let none whom he hath ran - somed fail to greet him,

one soul should fail to know his love and might.
 and died on earth that all might live a - bove.
 till God shall bring his king - dom's joy - ful day.
 through thy ne - glect, un - fit to see his face.

Dismissal

Minister Go forth into this world. Don't be afraid. Don't be ashamed to be people of love. Go forth into this world in joy, and help us to change it from the nightmare it often is, into the dream that God intends.

People **Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia!**

Postlude

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This week in prayer

Please remember these persons and congregations in your prayers this week:

Our Bishops Bonnie, Michael, Justin, Moises (TEC); Elizabeth, Donald and Craig (ELCA)
and for all priests, deacons, Ministry Teams, and those in formation

Anglican Cycle of Prayer:

June 18 The Anglican Church of Australia

Diocese of Michigan Cycle of Prayer:

June 18 All Saints', Detroit; Grace Church, Southgate; St Aidan's, Michigan Center

St Barnabas Cycle of Prayer: Katherine, Pat, Anabelle, Georgia, Grace

and our continuing prayers for: Bob, Carlos, Robert, Selenah, Jim M, Mardi

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Faith in Action provides leadership in collecting donations of food to support households in need in the Chelsea and Dexter areas. They are in need of our continuing help. You may bring your donations to FIA, or to [Nancy](#) who will see that they get there. **If you bring food directly to FIA**, please let Nancy know, so she can continue to keep our records of donation. If you write a check, please make it to *Faith In Action*. The **next Food Drive** is TODAY, **June 18**. Please contribute as generously as you can.

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Upcoming Commemorations

- June 18 Bernard Mizeki, Martyr, 1896
- 19 Adelaide Teague Case, Educator, 1948
- 22 Alban, Martyr, c.304

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June 18, 2023 – Proper 6A

Genesis 18:1-15

In the Book of Genesis, chapter 18, verses 1-15, the ever-faithful Abraham, first of the Hebrew patriarchs, unexpectedly plays host to God and two angelic companions at an oak grove near his home in the Hebron neighborhood, a township nestled in the Judean Mountains of Palestine. While these three visitors do not appear as anyone special, Abraham immediately recognizes his divine guests and offers them the best hospitality he possibly can. While Abraham and his wife Sarah are already very old, God informs Abraham that he will pay them another visit at an appointed time and on his return, will enable his wife to become pregnant and produce a son. Overhearing the conversation from their tent and recognizing her advanced age, Sarah is doubtful of this prospect and laughs. When she realizes that God has overheard her laughing, she is afraid to admit her lack of faith and unsuccessfully tries to deny that she had laughed.

In our contemporary world surrounded by scientific and technological advances, how often do we use these advances to justify our lack of faith in the ability of God to intervene in our lives, rationalizing that the people of biblical times were somehow different than ourselves? The reaction of Sarah in this story shows us that just as in our contemporary era, these biblical characters were no different: they also doubted the unimaginable. Sarah is already advanced in age and she knows it is biologically impossible for her to have a child at her age. Nonetheless, her ever-faithful husband Abraham responds without doubt, only faith. He had even recognized the divine origin of his anonymous visitors without question, unlike Sarah who had not realized until sometime later.

- Do we allow our doubt to blind us to the divine presence in the world? What can we do to awaken ourselves and be more aware of this presence?
- Are we afraid to acknowledge our doubt to God or to others? What can we do in our church communities to make it safe to acknowledge our doubt and thereby enable ourselves and our church communities to grow in faith?

Psalm 116:1, 10-17

In Psalm 116, the psalmist expresses his relief and overwhelming feeling of thankfulness to God after recovering from illness. His faith has been strengthened and he expresses his thankfulness by committing himself to openly living out his faith, thus glorifying God.

In our contemporary age with many medical advances in technology and medicine, it is easy to overlook God's part in our successful recovery. Just as the psalmist, we must faithfully remember God's presence in our lives and the healing he offers us when we are suffering illness or other difficult circumstances. Let us always be thankful for God's healing presence and always offer the best of ourselves to him as an expression of our thankfulness.

- Have you ever experienced this kind of overwhelming thankfulness to God after overcoming hardship or suffering? How did you express your thankfulness?
- What are some other ways we can express our thankfulness to God?

Romans 5:1-8

In Paul's letter to the church in Rome, he sends a message of encouragement to the Christians there that they have been made right with God and are at peace with him simply through their faith in Christ. Suffering persecution was part of life for the early Christians and so Paul encourages them to see their suffering as helping to strengthen their faith and remember that God's presence is always with them. Perhaps Paul draws on his own experience of suffering for his faith. He continues by attempting to ease any doubt in their minds about God's love for them by reminding them that Jesus had sacrificed himself out of love for them even before they were right with God and undeserving—so how much more is his love for them now that they have faith in him?

Often, we feel we must do something to be worthy of God's love for us, but Paul assures us that our faith is enough. Jesus was willing to sacrifice his life for us even before we had faith in him, so just as Paul assures the Christians in Rome thousands of years ago of Jesus' love for them because of their faith in him, so too can we feel assured. Faith always comes first, and any good works that we do are an expression of that faith. They are not requirements to be loved by God.

- Have you ever felt suffering for your faith? Do you feel this suffering has strengthened your faith and did you feel God was present with you in your suffering?
- Are you convinced of God's love for you? How can you convince others of this love?

Matthew 9:35-10:8

In this selection from the Gospel According to Matthew, Jesus is fulfilling his mission of teaching, preaching, and healing throughout the entire Galilean region of Israel. Motivated by compassion for the people whom he had realized were in great need of healing and leadership, and also realizing the task was too great for himself alone to fulfill, he gathers together twelve of his followers, representing the twelve tribes of Israel, to assist him in his task. He delegates his authority to them. These disciples were a diverse group from all walks of life and Jesus would often complain about the lack of faith shown by the apostles he had chosen, but nonetheless, they were faithful enough to accept the task Jesus had given them, even to the point of leaving their former lives behind and experiencing suffering. Jesus, in asserting his messiahship over his own people, while also knowing they were in great need of healing and spiritual guidance themselves, made the priority of his new apostles to go first to the Jewish people. They would provide healing to them and announce the coming of the Kingdom of God, for which John the Baptist had long been preparing them. However, while they were to accept whatever the people gave them to provide for their basic needs, they were not to request payment in the same way that Jesus himself had not requested payment from them. God's unmerited, merciful love and healing were already payment in full.

How often do our church communities expect leaders to fulfill the mission of the church while being unwilling to actively assist in this great task? Do we see simply attending church on Sundays and perhaps participating in a Bible study session as enough of a burden in our busy lives? If we do offer to assist, do we expect something in return, even payment, before we are willing to do it? As Jesus himself realized, while there is much to do and people are in great need of healing and spiritual guidance, there is an even greater need for all of us to actively assist in this work. Let us be generous with our time and talent, even if we believe our faith is insufficient for the task, and simply offer ourselves in faithfulness and allow God to work through us.

- In what ways does your church community fulfill its mission in the world? Do the church members actively assist in this mission?
- In what ways can you use your time and talent to assist in the mission of your church?

This Bible study was written by **Daniel Woods**

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Eucharistic Prayer from Wells, Samuel and Abigail Kocher. *Eucharistic prayers*. Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 2016, pp.194-195.

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Our Mission:

We seek to grow as diverse disciples of Jesus Christ,
 and to serve Jesus by serving others in the world, guided by the values of
 Ancient Rites, Open Minds, and Affirming Hearts.



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