

Worship Service

5th Sunday after Pentecost – June 27, 2021

St. Christopher-by-the-Sea

Gibson Island, Maryland

Introduction – The Rev. Charles Rowins

Hymn 525, stanzas 1-2

The Church's one foundation

Minister: Blessed by God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

People: *And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.*

Minister: 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.*

Song of Praise

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.

*Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you,
we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.*

*Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us;*

you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,

you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,

in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Collect for 5th Sunday after Pentecost

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

Almighty God, you have built your church upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone: Grant us so to be joined together in unity of spirit by their doctrine, that we may be made an holy temple acceptable to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

First Reading: Wisdom of Solomon 1:13-15, 2:23-24 – see lesson insert

Psalm 30 – see lesson insert

Second Reading: 2 Corinthians 8:7-15 – see lesson insert

Hymn 531, stanzas 1-2

O Spirit of the living God

Gospel: Mark 5:21-43 – see lesson insert

Sermon – The Rev. Charles Rowins

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:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.

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.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He 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.

Prayers of the People

Father, we pray for your holy Catholic Church;
That we all may be one.

Grant that every member of the Church may truly and humbly serve you;

That your Name may be glorified by all people.

We pray for all bishops, priests, and deacons;

That they may be faithful ministers of your Word and Sacraments.

We pray for all who govern and hold authority in the nations of the world;

That there may be justice and peace on the earth.

Give us grace to do your will in all that we undertake;

That our works may find favor in your sight.

Have compassion on those who suffer from any grief or trouble;

That they may be delivered from their distress.

Give to the departed eternal rest;

Let light perpetual shine upon them.

We praise you for your saints who have entered into joy;

May we also come to share in your heavenly kingdom.

Let us pray for our own needs and those of others.

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Lord, hear the prayers of your people; and what we have asked faithfully, grant that we may obtain effectually, to the glory of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Confession

Most merciful God,

We confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.

We have not loved you with our whole heart;

we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.

We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.

For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us;

that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your Name. *Amen.*

Absolution

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.*

Announcements and *America*

My country, 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing;

Long may our land be bright with freedom's holy light;

Protect us by thy might, great God, our King.

Prayer of St. Chrysostom

Almighty God, who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication unto thee, and has promised through thy well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name thou wilt be in the midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of thy servants as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come life everlasting. *Amen.*

Hymn 680, stanzas 1-3

O God, our help in ages past

Dismissal

Alleluia! Alleluia! Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!

Lessons for Fifth Sunday of Pentecost – June 27, 2021

Collect: Almighty God, you have built your Church upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone: Grant us so to be joined together in unity of spirit by their teaching, that we may be made a holy temple acceptable to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Old Testament: 2 Samuel 1:1, 17-27

After the death of Saul, when David had returned from defeating the Amalekites, David remained two days in Ziklag. David intoned this lamentation over Saul and his son Jonathan. (He ordered that *The Song of the Bow* be taught to the people of Judah; it is written in the Books of Jashar.) He said: Your glory, O Israel, lies slain upon our high places! How the mighty have fallen! Tell it not in Gath, proclaim it not in the streets of Ashkelon; or the daughters of the Philistines will rejoice, the daughters of the uncircumcised will exult. You mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew or rain upon you, nor bounteous fields! For there the shield of the mighty was defiled, the shield of Saul, anointed with oil no more. From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan did not turn back, nor the sword of Saul return empty. Saul and Jonathan, beloved and lovely! In life and in death they were not divided; they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions. O daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you with crimson, in luxury, who put ornaments of gold on our apparel. How the mighty have fallen in the midst of the battle! Jonathan lies slain upon our high places. I am distressed for you, my brother Jonathan; greatly beloved were you to me. How the mighty have fallen, and the weapons of war perished!

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

Psalm 130

Out of the depths have I called to you, O Lord; Lord, hear my voice;

Let your ears consider well the voice of my supplication.

If you, Lord were to note what is done amiss,

O Lord, who could stand?

For there is forgiveness with you;

therefore you shall be feared.

I wait for the Lord; my soul waits for him;

in his word is my hope.

My soul waits for the Lord, more than watchmen for the morning,

more than watchmen for the morning.

O Israel, wait for the Lord,

for with the Lord there is mercy;

With him is plenteous redemption,

and he shall redeem Israel from all their sins.

Epistle: 2 Corinthians 8:7-15

As you excel in everything – in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in utmost eagerness, and in our love for you – so we want you to excel also in this generous undertaking. I do not say this as a command, but I am testing the genuineness of our love against the earnestness of others. For you know the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich. And in this matter I am giving my advice: it is appropriate for you who began last year not only to do something but even to desire to do something – now finish doing it, so that your eagerness may be matched by completing it according to our means. For if the eagerness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has – not according to what one does not have. I do not mean that there should be relief for others and pressure on you, but it is a question of a fair balance between your present abundance and their need, so that their abundance may be for your need, in order that there may be a fair balance. As it is written, “The one who had much did not have too much, and the one who had little did not have too little.”

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

Gospel: Mark 5:21-43

When Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a great crowd gathered around him; and he was by the sea. Then one of the leaders of the synagogue named Jairus came and, when he saw him, fell at his feet and

Begged him repeatedly, "My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well, and live." So he went with him,

And a large crowd followed him and pressed in on him. Now there as a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years. She had endured much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had; and she was no better, but rather grew worse. She had heard about Jesus, and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, for she said, "If I but touch his clothes, I will be made well." Immediately her hemorrhage stopped; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. Immediately aware that power had gone forth from him, Jesus turned about in the crowd, and said, "Who touched my clothes? And his disciples said to him, "You see the crowd pressing in on you; how can you say, 'Who touched me?'" He looked all around to see who had done it. But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling, fell down before him, and told him the whole truth. He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease." While he was still speaking, some people came from the leader's house to say, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the teacher any further?" But overhearing what they said, Jesus said to the leader of the synagogue, "Do not fear, only believe." He allowed no one to follow him except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James. When they came to the house of the leader of the synagogue, he saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. When he had entered, he said to them, "Why do you make a commotion and weep? The child is not dead but sleeping." And they laughed at him. Then he put them all outside, and took the child's father and mother and those who were with him, and went in where the child was. He took her by the hand and said to her, "Talitha cum," which means, "Little girl, get up!" And immediately the girl got up and

began to walk about (she was twelve years of age). At this they were overcome with amazement. He strictly ordered them that no one should know this, and told them to give her something to eat.

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

Hymns for 5th Sunday after Pentecost – June 27, 2021

Hymn 525, stanzas 1-2

The Church's one foundation

The Church's one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord
she is his new creation by water and the word:
from heaven he came and sought her to be his holy bride;
with his own blood he bought her, and for her life he died.

Elect from every nation, yet one o'er all the earth,
her charter of salvation, one Lord, one faith, one birth;
one holy Name she blesses, partakes one holy food,
and to one hope she presses, with every grace endued.

Hymn 531, stanzas 1-2

O Spirit of the living God

O Spirit of the living God, in all thy plenitude of grace,
where'er the foot of man hath trod, descend on our apostate race.

Give tongues of fire and hearts of love, to preach the reconciling word;
give power and unction from above, when e'er the joyful sound is heard.

Hymn 680, stanzas 1-3

O God, our help in ages past

O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home:

Under the shadow of thy throne thy saints have dwelt secure;
sufficient is thine arm alone, and our defense is sure.

Before the hills in order stood, or earth received her frame,
from everlasting thou art God, to endless year the same.

**Sermon preached by The Rev. Charles Rowins at St. Christopher-by-the-Sea,
Gibson Island, Maryland, 5th Sunday after Pentecost, June 27, 2021.**

A disturbing characteristic of American society is how divisive our political camps are. And if the leaders of these camps don't like one another, it's probable that the followers in these camps don't like one another either. When one wins, the other loses. One gloats, the others scheme. It gets pretty ugly.

Which takes us to our Old Testament lesson today (**2 Samuel 1:1, 17-27**). When we read this lesson from the Book of Samuel, one verse jumps out at us. At least it does for me, and I suspect for you.

“How the mighty have fallen in the midst of battle.”

In today's political climate, we approach this verse in one of two ways.

Here's way one. Thank God, he/she lost. He/she is a terrible human being and deserves to lose.

Here's way two. I'm sorry that he/she lost. He/she doesn't represent my way of thinking. But that doesn't mean that I don't respect him/her and appreciate his/her service.

“How the mighty have fallen.” Way one: too bad, so sad. Way two: at least we can all honor his/her service.

The context for this scripture passage is the relationship of King Saul and the future King, David. Saul the elder. David the younger. Saul on his way out. David on his way up. There could be only one King at a time.

As David's popularity grew, Saul grew jealous. And rather than have to admit that David was the new leader, Saul committed suicide. David could have gloated. But he did not. In his own way, he admired Saul. David had fought for Saul, after all. David slew Goliath to serve King Saul.

It was a difficult transition to say the least. David could have gloated: "How the mighty have fallen, King Saul" and laughed, or David could have honored Saul: "Thank you for your service" and meant it.

That's the choice that increasingly, it seems to me, characterizes our political climate. Gloat or honor. Do we hear much honoring these days? No. Do we hear much gloating these days? Oh yes.

So, what are we to do? Well, the editors – remember them - came to a conclusion. They included in today's set of lessons **Psalm 130**.

O Israel, wait for the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy.

With him there is plenteous redemption, and he shall redeem Israel from all their sins.

In other words, you, whatever camp you're in, take the discourse down a notch. Focus on the positive.

The editors continue. They select a passage from Second Corinthians

(2 Corinthians 8:7-15). "And in this matter I am giving my advice: it is appropriate for you who began last year, not only to do something, but even to desire to do something – now finish doing it, so that your eagerness may be matched by completing it according to your means."

In other words, "Okay, you lost an election, but you didn't lose your voice, your commitment. Stay the course. Act on what you believe. Contribute. Don't withhold your energy, your beliefs, your hard work." Notice the phrase at the end of this passage: "a fair balance between your present abundance and their need."

The chief characters in today's gospel (**Mark 5:21-43**) are a woman who is suffering and a father who believes his daughter has died. Jesus was besieged with people wanting his healing powers. But he didn't call in tired. He treated both the woman and the father. He didn't ask their political allegiance. He cared only for their condition and how he could help. He made himself and his gifts available.

Sadly, there's little room in our current political climate to employ at least some of the strengths of those out of power as well as those currently in power. What kind of modeling of human behavior are we seeing and inevitably teaching a new generation?

“How the mighty have fallen!” Now what: “We win, you lose,” or, “Let’s work together.” The latter was David’s choice. And it can be our choice.

Note that St. Paul cites scripture: “The one who had much did not have too much, and the one who had little did not have too little.” In other words, everybody can contribute to the common good. Therefore, those in power need to be open to those not in power. There is strength in reaching out. Today’s Collect uses the phrase “joined together in unity of spirit.” A unity that can be achieved by their – plural - teaching. A lesson for all of us – again plural.

It’s not by accident that our national pledge of allegiance ends with these words: liberty and justice for all – plural.

One more thought about the editors of today’s lessons. Remember, the editors did two things: they included Psalm 130 and its emphasis on “mercy,” and they included the 2 Corinthians passage and its notion of “according to your means.”

It’s tempting to see mercy only as something we want to receive. All well and good, but we can deliver mercy as well as receive it. And it’s tempting to underestimate what our individual means are. We have lots of means that can contribute to the common good.

In a way, therefore, we are editors. We can size up situations and see where changes can be helpful, and then offer those suggestions. People have a role to play even when they are out of power. And – this is important – people have a role to play when they are in power. Jesus knew both worlds: sacrifice and victory. And how he handled both is worth our attention and our sharing.

Happy editing. Amen.