

St. Christopher-by-the-Sea, Gibson Island, Maryland

Second Sunday of Pentecost, June 6, 2021

Welcome and Introduction – The Rev. Charles Rowins

Hymn 365, stanzas 1-2

Come, thou almighty King

Opening Sentence: The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.

Confession

*Almighty and most merciful Father,
we have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep,
we have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts,
we have offended against thy holy laws,
we have left undone those things which we ought to have done,
and have done those things which we ought not to have done.
But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us,
spare thou those who confess their faults,
restore thou those who are penitent,
according to thy promises declared unto mankind
in Christ Jesus our Lord;
and grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake,
that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life,
to the glory of thy holy Name. Amen.*

Absolution

The Almighty and merciful Lord grant you absolution and remission of all your sins, true repentance, amendment of life, and the grace and consolation of his Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

Invitation to Venite and Psalm

O Lord, open thou our lips,

And our mouth shall show forth thy praise.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

The Venite - seated

O come, let us sing unto the Lord;

let us heartily rejoice in the strength of our salvation.

Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving,

and show ourselves glad in him with psalms.

For the Lord is a great God,

and a great King above all gods.

In his hand are all the corners of the earth,

and the strength of the hills is his also.

The sea is his and he made it,

and his hands prepared the dry land.

O come, let us worship and fall down

and kneel before the Lord our Maker.

For he is the Lord our God,

and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand.

O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness;

let the whole earth stand in awe of him.

For he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth,

and with righteousness to judge the world and the peoples with his truth.

Psalm 130 – see lesson insert

First Lesson – Genesis 3:8-15 - see lesson insert

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

Second Reading – 2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1- see lesson insert

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

Hymn 526, stanzas 1 and 5

Let saints on earth in concert sing

The Gospel - Mark 3:20-35

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

Sermon – The Rev. Charles Rowins

The Apostles' Creed - standing

I believe in God, the Father almighty,

maker of heaven and earth;

And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord;

who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,

born of the Virgin Mary,

suffered under Pontius Pilate,

was crucified, dead, and buried.

He descended into hell.

The third day he rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven,

and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father almighty.

From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost,

the holy catholic Church,

the communion of saints,

the forgiveness of sins,

the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer - seated

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,

for ever and ever. Amen.

Suffrages - seated

O Lord, show thy mercy upon us;

And grant us thy salvation.

Endue thy ministers with righteousness;

And make thy chosen people joyful.

Give peace, O Lord, in all the world;

For only in thee can we live in safety.

Lord, keep this nation under thy care;

And guide us in the way of justice and truth.

Let thy way be known upon earth;

Thy saving health among all nations.

Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten;

Nor the hope of the poor be taken away.

Create in us clean hearts, O God;

And sustain us with thy Holy Spirit.

Collects for Sundays, 2nd Pentecost, and the Future

O God, who makes us glad with the weekly remembrance of the glorious resurrection of your Son our Lord: Grant us this day such blessing through our worship of you, that the days to come may be spent in your favor, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

O God, who on this day taught the hearts of your faithful people by sending to them the light of your Holy Spirit: Grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

O God our heavenly Father, you have blessed us and given us dominion over all the earth: Increase our reverence before the mystery of life; and give us new insight into your purposes for the human race, and new wisdom and determination in making provision for its future in accordance with your will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

The General Thanksgiving

Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we thine unworthy servants

do give thee most humble and hearty thanks

for all thy goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all men.

We bless thee for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life;

but above all for thine inestimable love

in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ,

for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.

And, we beseech thee, give us that due sense of all thy mercies,

that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful;

and that we show forth thy praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives,

by giving up our selves to thy service,

and by walking before thee in holiness and righteousness all our days;

through Jesus Christ our Lord,

to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, world without end. 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 hast 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.*

The Grace

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore. *Amen.*

Hymn 555, stanzas 1 and 2

Lead on, O King eternal

Dismissal

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

Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia.

Lessons for 2nd Sunday after Pentecost – June 6, 2021

Collect: O God, from whom all good proceeds: Grant that by your inspiration we may think of those things that are right, and by your merciful guiding may do them; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Old Testament: Genesis 3:8-15

They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" He said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate." Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent tricked me, and I ate." The Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you among all animals and among all wild creatures; upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel."

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 there is plenteous redemption,

and he shall redeem Israel from all their sins.

Epistle: 2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1

Just as we have the same spirit of faith that is in accordance with scripture – “I believed, and so I spoke” – we also believe, and we speak, because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus, and will bring us with you into his presence. Yes, everything is for your sake, so that grace, as it extends to more and more people, may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God. So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal. For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Gospel: Mark 3:20-35

The crowd came together again, so that Jesus and his disciples could not even eat. When his family heard it, they went out to restrain him, for people were saying, "He has gone out of his mind." And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, "He has Beelzebul, and by the ruler of the demons he casts out demons." And he called them to him, and spoke to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but his end has come. But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his property without first tying up the strong man; then indeed the house can be plundered. "Truly I tell you, people will be forgiven for their sins and whatever blasphemies they utter; but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit can never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin"- for they had said, "He has an unclean spirit." Then his mother and his brothers came; and standing outside, they sent to him and called him. A crowd was sitting around him; and they said to him, "Your mother and your brothers and sisters are outside, asking for you." And he replied, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" And looking at those who sat around him, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother."

Hymns for Second Sunday of Pentecost – June 6, 2021

Hymn 365, stanzas 1-2

Come, thou almighty King

Come, thou almighty King, help us thy Name to sing,
Help us to praise. Father whose love unknown all things created own,
build in our hearts thy throne, Ancient of Days.

Come, thou incarnate Word, by heaven and earth adored;
Our prayer attend: come, and thy people bless; come, give thy word success;
stablish thy righteousness, Savior and friend.

Hymn 526, stanzas 1 and 5

Let saints on earth in concert sing

Let saints on earth in concert sing with those whose work is done;
for all the servants of our King in heaven and earth are one.

Jesus, be thou our constant Guide; then, when the word is given,
bid Jordan's narrow stream divide, and bring us safe to heaven.

Hymn 555, stanzas 1-2

Lead on, O King eternal

Lead on, O King eternal, the day of march has come;
henceforth in fields of conquest thy tents shall be our home:
through days of preparation thy grace has made us strong,
and now, O King eternal, we lift our battle song.

Lead on, O King eternal, till sin's fierce war shall cease,
and holiness shall whisper the sweet amen of peace;
for not with swords loud clashing, nor roll of stirring drums,
but deeds of love and mercy, the heavenly kingdom comes.

**Sermon preached by The Rev. Charles Rowins at St. Christopher-by-the-Sea,
Gibson Island, Maryland, Second Sunday of Pentecost, June 6, 2021.**

This morning I would like us to look at verse 3 of today's psalm (**Psalm 130**): "For there is forgiveness with you; therefore you shall be feared."

Now, that's an interesting relationship. Maybe even counter-intuitive. Why would we fear in response to forgiveness? Stated more directly, why would we fear forgiveness? Wouldn't we welcome forgiveness? What's not to like about forgiveness? It's a fresh start after all.

Well, perhaps we fear forgiveness because it is an acknowledgement of something for which we need forgiveness. That's it, isn't it? We don't want to think about forgiveness because it reminds us that we did something we shouldn't have done. To shine a spotlight on forgiveness is to shine a spotlight on our misbehavior. And that's no fun at all.

So, Lord, keep your forgiveness, please. I would rather ignore what it is that I did wrong. Ignorance is bliss.

Now, there's another interesting concept. Ignorance is bliss? How can that be? "Bliss" is not a neutral term. It is loaded. It is positive in the extreme. And anything in "the extreme" is never ignored.

So, what's going on here?

First of all, when we fall short of expectations, be they expectations of others or ourselves, we know it. And we're not proud of it. We would much rather meet expectations, both of others and of ourselves, than not to meet them. Failure is no fun.

And, second of all, it is really hard to believe that anyone could say to us and mean, "Not to worry. So you didn't meet expectations. No big deal. Move ahead with your life."

If only it was that easy. The reality is though that we're not created just to "move ahead with our life." We have more pride than that. In our best moments, we own our behavior. And owning our behavior means taking responsibility and if necessary changing our behavior. Or, at a minimum, apologizing for that behavior. Being forgiven is all well and good, but it's not enough. We need to make good. We need to atone for our misbehavior. And, better yet, we need to avoid misbehavior in the first place.

Is that likely? No, it's not likely. We're human, which means that we dig holes for ourselves, from which we can't get out on our own. And no clever explanation, such as ignorance, addresses that reality.

But – and this is the point of this morning – this self-made pickle is addressed. There is compensation, in the best sense of that word. And that compensation comes from the Lord. The Lord pays the fee to get us out of the self-made pickle.

And what does the Lord expect in return for this huge favor, this salvation which we could not accomplish on our own? The Lord expects a profound thank-you, that's what.

But, here again, we're not done. There's more work to do, and this time it's our work. The Lord has forgiven. We need now to make a response. And the expected response is at the heart of verse 3 of today's Psalm: "For there is forgiveness with you; therefore you shall be feared."

In other words, don't take the Lord's forgiveness for granted. That's not "fearing the Lord." No, "fearing the Lord" is achieved, is "owned," by doing the Lord's work, by meeting the Lord's expectations, by avoiding self-made pickles, by realizing that the Lord's forgiveness is a gift, but not a given.

The Lord can pull that gift whenever the Lord wants. That this doesn't happen more often is, for you and me, persuasive evidence that there is no more important relationship in all the world than with our God. Later in Psalm 130 are these statements: "For with the Lord there is mercy. With him there is plenteous redemption."

Mercy and redemption. All of us need it. All of us want it. And it's available. And it starts with "fear of the Lord." "For there is forgiveness with you; therefore you shall be feared."

It's a pretty straight-forward transaction. And it's an on-going transaction. We fear the Lord and the Lord provides "a building from God, a house not made with

hands, eternal in heavens.” So, says St. Paul to the Corinthians (**2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1**).

Now, let me guess. You’re wondering now just how the Garden of Eden fits into this puzzle (**Genesis 3:8-15**). What did Adam and Eve know that we don’t know. Well, it turns out that they didn’t know any more than we know. God confronts them both, and both have excuses. Adam claims that Eve gave him the apple, and Eve claims that the serpent tricked her. We offer our own version of these excuses.

But that’s not the end of the Story. In the end of this passage (**Genesis 3:8-15**), there is an exchange of blows between Evil, the serpent, and Good, the offspring. Notice who has the last laugh: “You – the Good – will strike his heel.” In New Testament terms, the first blow is the Crucifixion. The counter blow is the Resurrection.

And that’s where we are. We know what it is to be knocked around. Much of the knocking is a result of our misbehavior. But we also know what it is for God to respond with a punch that only God can deliver, which we believe that God did deliver in Christ.

This return knock, which we know as Easter, is a form of Love beyond our comprehension, but not beyond our thanksgiving. God’s Power, capital P Power, is something to be feared. That’s the first thing you and I need to recognize. But there’s more, isn’t there? There’s a second thing: the counter punch, the Resurrection, the New Life, the Good News, the Plenteous Redemption which Psalm 130 proclaims.

Friday was bad. Or so we thought. But that tomb didn't contain God the Son.
Sunday – interestingly for you and me the Day of the Son – set the record straight.
Jesus lives. Christ is Risen. Hallelujah!

Amen.