

Prelude

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Introduction

The gospel for Easter's seventh Sunday is always taken from the long prayer Jesus prays for his followers in John's gospel on the night before his death, and always includes Jesus' desire that his followers will be one as he and the Father are one. This oneness is not mere doctrinal agreement or institutional unity, but mutual abiding, interpenetrating life, mutual love, and joy. This oneness is the work of the Spirit whom we have received but also await. Come, Holy Spirit!

Gathering Hymn: ELW #843 – *“Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness”*

Greeting - *Page 147*

Kyrie – *Page 147*

Canticle of Praise – *Page 149*

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

Gracious and glorious God, you have chosen us as your own, and by the powerful name of Christ you protect us from evil. By your Spirit transform us and your beloved world, that we may find our joy in your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

First Reading: Acts 1:15-17, 21-26

¹⁵In those days Peter stood up among the believers (together the crowd numbered about one hundred twenty persons) and said, ¹⁶“Friends, the scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit through David foretold concerning Judas, who became a guide for those who arrested Jesus—¹⁷for he was numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry.” ²¹So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, ²²beginning from the baptism

of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these must become a witness with us to his resurrection.”²³ So they proposed two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also known as Justus, and Matthias.²⁴ Then they prayed and said, “Lord, you know everyone’s heart. Show us which one of these two you have chosen²⁵ to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.”²⁶ And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 1

¹Happy are they who have not walked in the counsel of the wicked, nor lingered in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seats of the scornful!

²**Their delight is in the law of the LORD, and they meditate on God’s teaching day and night.**

³They are like trees planted by streams of water, bearing fruit in due season, with leaves that do not wither; everything they do shall prosper.

⁴**It is not so with the wicked; they are like chaff which the wind blows away.**

⁵Therefore the wicked shall not stand upright when judgment comes, nor the sinner in the council of the righteous.

⁶**For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked shall be destroyed**

Second Reading: 1 John 5:9-13

⁹If we receive human testimony, the testimony of God is greater; for this is the testimony of God that he has testified to his Son.¹⁰ Those who believe in the Son of God have the testimony in their hearts. Those who do not believe in God have made him a liar by not believing in the testimony that God has given concerning his Son.¹¹ And this is the testimony: God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.¹² Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.¹³ I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION – *Page 151*

GOSPEL: John 17:6-19

The holy gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus prayed:] ⁶“I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. ⁷Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; ⁸for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. ⁹I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. ¹⁰All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. ¹¹And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one. ¹²While I was with them, I protected them in your name that you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost except the one destined to be lost, so that the scripture might be fulfilled. ¹³But now I am coming to you, and I speak these things in the world so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves. ¹⁴I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. ¹⁵I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. ¹⁶They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. ¹⁷Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. ¹⁸As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. ¹⁹And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.”

The gospel of our Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Message

May the words of my mouth and the meditation of our hearts, be acceptable in Your sight O Lord, our Strength and our Redeemer. Amen

Our Psalm refers to people who “delight in the law of the Lord.” They meditate on it day and night. They are happy, and they are like trees planted by streams of water, which bear fruit in due season, and have leaves that do not wither.

I would like to share a couple events from my life that provide a personal example of what that can look like.

Several years ago I felt God asking me to focus on Him all day long. This was in addition to time I was already spending in the morning after breakfast, a shorter time after lunch and after supper.

In this new request, God wasn't asking for time in addition to that, but that I be focused on Him during that time as well as during the rest of the day. For example, I can be working on a sermon in my office and still be aware that my wife Rose is in a nearby room reading or working. I can be open to hearing her speak to me. She shouldn't have to shout at me to get my attention.

God can shout at us if it is necessary, but He prefers to speak in a gentle whisper. “Be still and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10). I have been working at being more aware of God's presence, and listening for His gentle whispers in everything I do all day long.

About a week-and-a-half ago, a few mornings in a row I woke up at 4 or 4:30. At that hour I am usually very still, usually asleep. There are no distractions. Once in a while I do wake up early, and I open my mind to God and wait for someone or something to come to mind. If it's a person I pray for him or her.

I remembered a girl that I had dated when I was about 20, and a specific event that happened. We had been dating about 6 months and I was falling head over heels for her. We were walking along and talking when she said, “My old boyfriend from my hometown is here in the city and wants me back.”

As I was reflecting on that event and those words, God whispered a sentence to me that struck me like lightning bolt. But I'm going to leave you in suspense for a moment and take you back to what I remember from that evening.

I honestly don't remember what I said to her. But I know that I felt like she had stabbed me in the heart. And I know that I didn't say any of the things

that I should have said – starting with how hurt and threatened I felt, and how much I cared about her and about us.

I don't remember our conversation, but we parted that evening agreeing to continue to see each other; and I gave her permission to see her old boyfriend if she wanted to. I went home feeling that there was a good chance that she would one day choose him over me. That's not exactly what happened, but a few months later I felt stabbed in the heart again by something she did, and I ended our relationship.

The words that God whispered to me at 4 am a week or so ago are, "Maybe she was asking you to be exclusive." Those words tore at my heart. It took quite a while for me to accept how badly I misunderstood her words and her intentions, and ended up destroying our relationship.

I know now that at that time I was not emotionally mature or secure enough to navigate a serious relationship with her, or any girl. God knew that too, and He knew that he had someone else in mind for me, and probably had someone else in mind for this young woman. Painful as it was for each of us, it was better that we separated at this time rather than later.

I was comforted by the fact that I didn't sense any reprimand from God. He wasn't out to make me feel guilty for what I did to this sweet girl. His point was simply, "Jim I had a word for you that night in that situation, if you had simply come to me, asked for my help and listened for me to speak to you."

I knew that I wasn't listening to God that evening, or any other time because God and I had had a conversation 2 years earlier. That came to mind the following morning, again about 4 a.m.

All the way through Grade 13 I wondered what I should do after I graduate. All of my teachers, and my parents, pounded the message, "you have to go to university to get a good education and then a good job."

I had no real problem with that, except to be educated to do what? I looked at my teachers and wondered, "Could I be a teacher?" Probably not a good one; I would be far too nervous standing in front of a class of students day after day.

During the course of the year I considered a variety of occupations, but didn't find one that appealed to me. I don't remember the specific time or date, but probably near the end of the school year, one of my 2 older brothers wrote a letter to my parents saying that he was going to quit his job

in Toronto, go to university to get his BA, and then go to Seminary to be a pastor.

As my Mom read this letter out loud to my Dad, my sister and I, when she read the words, “to be a pastor” my heart heard the words, “That should be you.” I knew immediately that was God speaking to me.

My response was, “I can’t. I am too quiet, way too nervous to ever stand in front of a congregation, and don’t have anywhere near enough faith in God to be a pastor.” I then pointed God to some people that I thought were better candidates and left it at that. As far as I was concerned that conversation was finished.

That morning at 4 a.m., as I pondered all of this, I sensed God whisper, “You walked away after you gave your response to me, but I still had this to say to you: Jim, you realize that you are an empty vessel, and it’s good that you realize that. My Son uses empty vessels. He is a fountain of life and if you invite Him in, He will fill you, and together with the Holy Spirit He will give you everything you need and will be everything you need and more.”

Today I can add that Jesus told the Samaritan woman he met at a well, that He is a fountain of life. He could be that fountain of life for her and for everyone who believes in Him as they invite Him in to their life. So this word that God spoke to me is not just for me, not just for those He calls to be pastors, but for anyone and everyone who lives by faith in Jesus.

Going back to that early morning, as I reflected on God’s gentle whisper, and on the one from the day before, I sensed God whispering, “This is why I asked you to be focused on me all the time. I have been there for you every moment of your life; I had a word for you in every situation, an answer to every question, a solution to every problem. For a long time you weren’t listening at all, and didn’t hear any of my words to you. Then, later, you did start to listen, but only heard some of what I had to say because you only listened some of the time.”

My response was, “I want to hear all of your whispers, all of your answers, all of your solutions.” I have known and preached for a long time that God loves us, and knows and wants what is best for us. He is life and He gives life, life that is abundant and eternal.

He is constantly working in us to lead us along that path of life. He has words that will help us understand the words and actions of people around us, so that we can build relationships rather than destroy them; words that

will help us navigate decisions and situations so that we stay on God's path of life. He has an answer for every question and a solution for every problem.

One point I want to emphasize is that God is not a great genie in the sky. We don't get to choose to accept and follow the words we like and ignore the ones we don't. We must learn to accept and obey all of them. God loves us and knows what is best for us. That's where His gentle whispers lead us.

I also want to emphasize that hearing God's gentle whispers, and having Jesus live in us as a fountain of life, does not give us a free pass out of, or around, suffering. God promises to be with us in our suffering, show us the way through it, and even carry us when necessary, so that we come out of times of suffering stronger in our character, deeper and stronger in our faith, and having learned whatever He wanted us to learn through that time of suffering.

I didn't agree with God's first word to me: that I should be a pastor. God had an answer to my objection, but I didn't wait to hear it. However, about 10 years later I invited Jesus into my life and was willing to be whatever He wanted me to be, including going to Seminary to become a pastor.

God knows we are not perfect. He knows we will have to struggle with some of His words to us. He is with us in the struggle so long as we invite and allow Him to struggle with us, to guide us and to bring us to the moment when we can trust Him enough to say "yes."

During my time in Seminary, one of the requirements was to serve 3 months in a hospital or similar institution under the supervision of a chaplain. It was there that I learned that I had a poor image of myself, which is why it was so easy for me to believe that that sweet girl that I cared about would likely choose her old boyfriend over me.

I also learned that I didn't trust my feelings and therefore didn't do well at sharing them, even with people I care about, and that I was shutting out the people I cared about the most.

I could continue to share more of my story, but we have a time limit. Suffice it to say that I learned to love and accept who I am and who God is transforming me to be.

My point is that God took that empty vessel, that fragile young man who was me, and showed me what He can do when we put ourselves in His hands and let Him do His thing: He transforms us into a new creation.

Along the way God introduced me to that beautiful young woman that He had in mind for me, and me for her, all along; someone who delights in having me share with her what is going on in me and in my life; someone who could love what she saw; someone I could love in return.

I have learned to meditate on God much of the time, still aiming for all of the time. I know Jesus is a fountain of life living in me. My hope and prayer is that everyone who looks at me sees that fountain of life and is drawn toward Him so that we can help them receive Him into themselves and receive for themselves, the life that He gives. Amen

Hymn of the Day: ELW #432 - *“The Head That Once Was Crowned”*
(verses 1-4)

Apostles’ Creed – Page 105

Prayers of Intercession

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.

A brief silence.

Holy God, in Christ Jesus the joy of the church is made complete. Root the church in your Word and unify us as Christ’s body. Send us into the world as your loving people, ready to testify to your Spirit at work. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Mighty God, the world is your handiwork, displaying your creative impulse. Seas teem with life, forests reach up to praise you, and the mystery of life lies deep in the soil. Guard and keep this world for the well-being of all your creatures. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Gracious Sovereign, those who follow your ways are like trees planted near streams of water. Establish the leaders of nations and all in authority in your grace and truth. Strengthen them, so that the people they serve will have abundant life. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Generous Savior, you befriend those who are sick, suffering, poor, lonely, outcast, rejected, or sick. Grant healing and love to all in need; especially, Florence, Jason, Richard, Heather, Sheila, Vince, Robert, Dorian, Ryan, Kristen. Give them tangible signs of your steadfast love. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

Creator God, here in this community we share the gift of praying, learning, and supporting one another. Give us thankful hearts as we claim the gifts that are unique to us and keep us from being envious of others with different gifts. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Saving God, your wonderful promise is the gift of eternal life in Jesus. Through the witness of those who have died in you, strengthen us now in this gift of life. We cherish the memory of your saints (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

In the hope of new life in Christ, we raise our prayers to you, trusting in your never-ending goodness and mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

COMMUNION

Music As Table Is Prepared

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING – Page 152

“Lamb of God”- Page 154

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

Wellspring of joy, through this meal you have put gladness in our hearts. Satisfy the hunger still around us, and send us as joyful witnesses, that your love may bring joy to the hearts of all people, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

BLESSING

SENDING HYMN: *ELW #655 – “Son of God, Eternal Saviour”*

Go in peace. Be the light of Christ.
Thanks be to God.

Postlude

From sundaysandseasons.com.

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News and Announcements:

Please Prayfor Those Who are Ill, in Hospital, or Requested Special Prayers: Florence Felske, Jason Godin, Richard Hubert, Heather Miller, Sheila Purdy, Vince Rabishaw, Robert Schoof, Dorian Verch, Ryan, Kristen.

GUIDING LIGHT DEADLINE

Please note that this Friday is the deadline for the June issue of the Guiding Light. Please have all submissions in to Jean at the office by this date. Thank you!

POTS FOR REPOTTING NEEDED

If you are cleaning up this spring and have any pots especially the 1 gallon size that you no longer want Ellen would love to have them. We are getting ready for the Horticultural Plant Sale and will need lots. You can drop them off at the church or my house, 171 Sawmill Rd, Pembroke, ON K8A 6W4, or I will pick up at your house. You can call at 613 732 7649. The sale is scheduled for Sunday, May 23rd at the Pembroke Market.

SERVICE BROADCAST ON COGECO

Cogeco Community Channel is now broadcasting Zion's services at 9:00 a.m. and 12 noon on Sunday mornings a week later.

COVID-19 VACCINE REGISTRATION AND BOOKING

In order to assist our seniors, Chair Susan Dupuis asked Ellen Vandersleen and Jan Scheidt for assistance in registering and booking our senior members for the Covid-19 vaccine. We have worked our way down the list (arranged by age) and continue to assist those members who might have difficulty in registering and booking an appointment. At the same time, we are also updating our church records, asking for cell phone numbers and email addresses. It is the goal of Church Council to have an updated list of

membership for when Pastor Scott and his wife, Sue arrive at the end of May. Pastor Scott begins his ministry here effective June 1st, 2021. Effective April 15, those members who received their shot, also received a return date the third week in July. Members who received their vaccine prior to April 15, will be telephoned or emailed a date for their second dose. If you require further assistance and need some help, please phone Ellen Vandersleen at (613) 732 – 7649 or Jan Scheidt at (613) 631 – 0658 and leave your name and phone number. Please note that Jan prefers to use her cell phone number (due to severe hearing loss) and it is (519) 752 – 9826. Many thanks to the many members who have graciously shared with Susan, Ellen and Jan information to update the church records. Jan Scheidt, Social Ministry Committee

CONFIRMATION CLASS

For Confirmation Class will be held via Zoom Classes May 16th at 11.30. If you have not received your invitation, contact Pastor Leena, leenabjensen@yahoo.ca

PUBLIC BIBLE READING

On Sunday June 6 the public reading of the bible will be taking place at the Pembroke Amphitheatre beginning at 1:00 pm. If you would like to participate please contact Ruth Kirk Davidson at 613-735-1877 or Lois Wilson at 613-687-4906 to book your time. You can also participate by reading your bible out loud at your home, either inside or outside.

UPDATES FROM CHURCH COUNCIL

Please remember that Pastor Leena is available to all for pastoral care during the next few months. This support may look different than we are accustomed to as she will be following all of the covid restrictions. She can be contacted at 613-631-1082

Today's Video Has Been Brought To You By Zion Lutheran Church's Production Crew:

Presider: Pastor Jim Goos

Musician: Blaine Sack

Worship Assistant/Reader: Wayne Kirk

Projectionist: Susan Dupuis

Recorder: Ty Phannenhour

Sound Board Operator: Todd Phannenhour

Credit Researcher: Diane Hammel

This Week at Zion – May 17 - 23

Tuesday **7p.m.** Narcotics Anonymous

Friday **Guiding Light Deadline**

Sunday **10am** Recording of Pentecost Worship Service with
Holy Communion

11:30am **Zoom Confirmation Class**