

The 6th Sunday after Pentecost
“Jesus invites you...to rest!” Matthew 11:28-30
July 5, 2026
Rev. Ed Weber

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, our text for this 6th Sunday after Pentecost is from our Gospel reading, Matthew 11:28-30.

“28 Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

So far our text:

Amen.

Yesterday our country celebrated its 250th anniversary. Our president’s address and the fireworks show were delayed by a thunderstorm so maybe you didn’t stay up until the late hours to watch it on TV.

And over 850,000 fireworks were exploded over a more than 30 minute celebration. I was pretty impressed with our drone show in Mercedes Thursday night. But, of course, what we witnessed on TV at our nation’s capital was absolutely breathtaking, not to mention it broke the Guinness Book of World records.

And President Trump remarked in his speech these important words: “with God's help, we can always be this or even better.”

Yes, indeed, all glory, all credit, goes first and foremost to God for the blessings that we have as a free country. And only with God’s help can greater good be achieved!

That’s first article of the Creed talk. That’s acknowledging that there is a God, the one true God from the Bible. That’s how we hear Jesus speak in the opening words of our Gospel reading as well.

“At that time Jesus answered and said, “I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth,”

Jesus speaks of His Father, for Jesus is the Son of God, very God of very God. Heaven and earth were created by God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. And He continues to be Lord over the earth He created. And all mankind must first acknowledge this. We thank God that our country acknowledges this in our very Declaration of Independence.

“When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation. We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed,”

Nature’s God, their Creator...our country wasn’t founded on the Big Bang Theory, but on the premise that there is a God who created all men with certain unalienable Rights, *“among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness”*.

And that’s where the 2nd article and 3rd article of the Creed must be known and believed for there to be true life, liberty, happiness and rest...rest for the soul!

One cannot know who Nature’s God is unless God reveals Himself. And thanks be to God, He did just that – through His Word, through the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ and God’s Word revealed through His prophets and apostles.

So speak the opening words of Hebrews chapter 1:

“God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, 2 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; 3 who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,”

And that a Christian's declaration of independence – independence from sin. For Jesus the Son of God revealed Himself to us as our Savior. He is the one who purged our sins! He is the one who received the fury of the Father's wrath upon Himself for our sins...the spiritual explosions of anger greater than any fireworks show on earth! And by His death, and resurrection Jesus has gained what all the world needs, not just the United States, but every person ever born into this world – absolute freedom and liberty from sin, death, and the devil. The law is no longer makes you its slave for Jesus has kept the law, carried the burden of the law perfectly and freely invites all to receive this great gift!

“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”

This is Jesus open invitation, His command to all to come to Him alone. For in Jesus alone is found true rest for the soul.

“Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”

Learn from Me. Know Me who I am, gentle and lowly in heart. Jesus came not to condemn the world but to be a ransom for the world, by humbling Himself to the point of death on the cross! He did this for every person in this world. And when this Word of God is believed by the power of the Holy Spirit, an unholy unbeliever receives the forgiveness of sins, true rest for the soul and becomes yoked – united with the Lord of Life!

Yes, our Nation's Declaration of Independence speaks correctly when it says that all men are created equal. But it doesn't speak about the sinful equalness that all men are born with, that all men are conceived in sin. This was not the Creator's doing for He made all things good. But with the fall of man, sin and evil are passed from generation to generation. And it is only by the establishment of a just government that the coarse outbursts of sin...like murder and theft can barely be restrained.

As Romas 3:12 reminds us with passages from the Psalms:

“They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one.”

Because of this unrest that plagues every person's conscience, there is a desire to find happiness, a desire to find life, and freedom from one's conscience – to find rest.

And the world searches for this happiness in the created world...riches, power, status, a desire to belong and accepted. And try as one may, the pursuit of happiness will always come up short.

It is only by God's pursuit of the sinner and God's revealing of His love for the sinner, and God's creating of faith in the sinner's heart to receive His love that true happiness, true peace and rest can be found.

“27 All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.”

God has to reveal the Son to a sinner for there to be rest of the soul. God pursues, God graciously wills, God mercifully yokes a sinner to Jesus the Lord of Life. And when that happens, a babe is born, a little one enters the kingdom of God.

“I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes.”

When Jesus is rejected, like He was by Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, the wise and the prudent remain lost in their sins and without happiness.

Jesus doesn't promise the babes a Utopia on earth. In fact, being yoked to Jesus will also involve suffering, persecution like John the Baptist who Jesus speaks of in the beginning of chapter 11 of Matthew. But Jesus does promise us rest from the burden of our sins and Utopia in heaven when He returns.

He promises His babes, you and me, believers in Jesus, who still have our sinful flesh warring against us and causing us to sin, rest in our souls. So Paul, in our epistle reading laments the heavy laden that he feels for his continual iniquities, his inability to keep God's law perfectly.

“22 For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. 24 O wretched man that I am!”

And so we also admit the same. But then hear again and again, Jesus invitation to come to Him alone, come to hear His Word of forgiveness, come to His table to receive His body and blood for your forgiveness. And then Paul exclaims the biggest firework of joy that one can ever profess.

“Who will deliver me from this body of death? 25 I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!”

And that is your Declaration of Independence from sin, death and the devil! All glory to God for this great freedom and rest for your soul! Amen.

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” Amen. (Philippians 4:7)