

# AUGUSTANA

where Lutherans and Anglicans worship together

Pentecost 3 June 21, 2020

WOV Service of Word & Prayer

Thank you to today's worship assistant, Margareth Peterson, and to our musician Deborah Buck and to the choir members who are helping us sing.

We begin our time of worship as we began our life of faith: in the name of God who is Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer. Amen.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

GATHERING HYMN "O Master, Let Me Walk with You" # 818 (verses 1, 3, 4)

O Master, let me walk with you  
in lowly paths of service true;  
tell me your secret; help me bear  
the strain of toil, the fret of care.

Teach me your patience, share with me  
in closer, dearer company,  
in work that keeps faith sweet and strong,  
in trust that triumphs over wrong.

In hope that sends a shining ray  
far down the future's broad'ning way;  
in peace that only you can give,  
with you, O Master, let me live.

CHILDREN'S TIME

Since one of our Bible Stories today is about 2 heroes of the faith – Abraham and Sarah – when I met with some of our kids on a video chat I

asked them about heroes. [when I could get past the cool digital disguises that is] . I asked them about heroes – who are the people we look up to .... And what do heroes do? They protect us.

Lots of super heros ... but it was harder to name actual real people. And when mentioned her hero, her dog, that seemed to make sense. And why their dogs?

Animals – dogs

- Keeps them safe, especially at night
- When you're lonely or sad they're there for company

Those are good super hero qualities

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray: God of truth uncovered, you trace the sparrow's flight and plumb the secrets of the heart: bring our fear and conflict into the light of your presence, so that we may lose our hollow life and find our way to you; this we ask through Jesus Christ, who is both the master and the slave. Amen.

SCRIPTURE SONG

**Refrain:** Salvation belongs to our God and to Christ the Lamb forever and ever.

Great and wonderful are your deeds, O God of the universe  
 Just and true are your ways, O Ruler of all the nations.  
 Who can fail to honor you, Lord, and sing the glory of your name? /refrain

For you alone are the Holy One.  
 All nations will draw near and worship before you,  
 For your just and holy works have been revealed. /refrain

SCRIPTURE READING a reading from Genesis 21:8-21

The child grew, and was weaned; and Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned. But Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, playing with her son Isaac. So she said to Abraham, 'Cast out this slave woman with her son; for the son of this slave woman shall not inherit along with my son Isaac.' The matter was very distressing to Abraham on

account of his son. But God said to Abraham, 'Do not be distressed because of the boy and because of your slave woman; whatever Sarah says to you, do as she tells you, for it is through Isaac that offspring shall be named after you. As for the son of the slave woman, I will make a nation of him also, because he is your offspring.' So Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread and a skin of water, and gave it to Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, along with the child, and sent her away. And she departed, and wandered about in the wilderness of Beer-sheba.

When the water in the skin was gone, she cast the child under one of the bushes. Then she went and sat down opposite him a good way off, about the distance of a bowshot; for she said, 'Do not let me look on the death of the child.' And as she sat opposite him, she lifted up her voice and wept. And God heard the voice of the boy; and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven, and said to her, 'What troubles you, Hagar? Do not be afraid; for God has heard the voice of the boy where he is. Come, lift up the boy and hold him fast with your hand, for I will make a great nation of him.' Then God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water. She went, and filled the skin with water, and gave the boy a drink.

God was with the boy, and he grew up; he lived in the wilderness, and became an expert with the bow. He lived in the wilderness of Paran; and his mother got a wife for him from the land of Egypt.

Word of God, Word of life **thanks be to God**

A reading from Psalm 86

A Prayer of David.

Incline your ear, O LORD, and answer me,  
for I am poor and needy.

Preserve my life, for I am devoted to you;  
save your servant who trusts in you.

You are my God; be gracious to me, O Lord,  
for to you do I cry all day long.

Gladden the soul of your servant,  
for to you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving,

abounding in steadfast love to all who call on you.  
 Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer;  
 listen to my cry of supplication.  
 In the day of my trouble I call on you,  
 for you will answer me.

There is none like you among the gods, O Lord,  
 nor are there any works like yours.  
 All the nations you have made shall come  
 and bow down before you, O Lord,  
 and shall glorify your name.  
 For you are great and do wondrous things;  
 you alone are God.  
 Teach me your way, O LORD,  
 that I may walk in your truth;  
 give me an undivided heart to revere your name.  
 I give thanks to you, O Lord my God, with my whole heart,  
 and I will glorify your name for ever.  
 For great is your steadfast love towards me;  
 you have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.

O God, the insolent rise up against me;  
 a band of ruffians seeks my life,  
 and they do not set you before them.  
 But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious,  
 slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.  
 Turn to me and be gracious to me;  
 give your strength to your servant;  
 save the child of your serving-maid.  
 Show me a sign of your favour,  
 so that those who hate me may see it and be put to shame,  
 because you, LORD, have helped me and comforted me.

Word of God, Word of life **thanks be to God**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Word of life, Jesus Christ, all glory to you!

Word of life Jesus Christ, all praise to you!  
 Our hearts burn within us while you open to us the Scriptures.  
 Word of life, Jesus Christ, all glory to you!  
 Word of life, Jesus Christ, all praise to you!

**GOSPEL:**

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew 10:24-39 **Glory to you, O Lord**

[And Jesus said,] 'A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master; it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher, and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household!

'So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground unperceived by your Father. And even the hairs of your head are all counted. So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.

'Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven.

'Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.  
 For I have come to set a man against his father,  
 and a daughter against her mother,  
 and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law;  
 and one's foes will be members of one's own household.  
 Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me;  
 and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me;  
 and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.

The Gospel of our Lord, **Praise to you, O Christ**

## MEDITATION

Hagar and Ishmael's story is one of prejudice & racism. It is a difficult Bible story to hear. Heroes of the faith Abraham & Sarah are revealed to be flawed ... very flawed. Feet of clay.

Their story is from a time and place vastly different from our life and times so we have to be careful how we read it and understand it. In this Bible story and in our faith tradition we recognize the importance of Abraham and Sarah. They gave up the life they knew when they answered God's call to travel West. They stepped out in faith ... they trusted God. That is why they are heroes of the faith. But they were also human, fallible. In their desire for a child Abraham took a concubine – a secondary wife with less rights and power than a regular wife. This was not a sordid affair, but an action supported by Sarah. An heir was needed and dire circumstances called for decisive action.

Hagar, an Egyptian slave, had a son – Ishmael -- and the succession was assured. Down the road a few years Sarah also had a child, Isaac. There was now an heir and a spare. Ishmael being the spare ... the unwanted back-up along with his mother Hagar.

So they were banished to the wilderness without a hope of survival. We might oscillate on who is to blame for the deadly banishment but both Abraham and Sarah are complicit in this action. And – make no mistake – this was an act of racism and prejudice.

Banished without a hope of survival and yet they survived. It is a miracle that they survived ... an act of grace ... God's intervention comes as a message that this action was not OK.

Prejudice: racism ... sexism ... ageism ... all the ism's ... it is a long standing problem ... there is no "let's do this and we will fix it forever" because prejudice continually takes on a new face. Like a weed it keeps coming back. Sometimes blatant like the horrific cell phone videos we have been seeing far too often lately. But it is also subtle – these are the systemic prejudices that are so hard to see when one is in the midst of them.

But another difficult thing to understand or accept is how Abraham & Sarah -- heroes of the faith-- could have done something so terrible. What do you do when someone you respect does something so stupid ... so violent?

People of faith are supposed to be better than that. Aren't they?

Last Sunday we sang "They'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love. Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love." And I wish that were true everyday, every hour. But it isn't. We like Abraham and Sarah do not live up to that song.

Sometimes people know we are Christians because we are quick to point fingers of blame at others ... sometimes people know we are Christians because we are good at making people feel shame. Some times people know we are Christians because we can't get along with each other. And

yes, every once in a while they know we are Christians because by our love ... but not often enough.

We bring not peace ... but violence. We fight. We do the opposite of what we are called to be. It's not new ... Abraham and Sarah lived it out as well. Jesus acknowledged it ... we live with it every day. And as disappointing as it is to recognize the wrong in our heroes of faith it is just as disappointing to see the same thing in our own lives.

We might condemn the racism we see but we are part of it and it is part of us. That's what systemic racism is. And it is as hard to see as it is to see the nose in the middle of our face.

That sounds completely hopeless doesn't it? But we look beyond ourselves for hope ...

Hagar and Ishmail found hope in the wilderness. They found a well of fresh water to renew their lives.

Where do we find hope in our wilderness? Where is the well of fresh water to renew our faith? I look to the words of Jesus that we heard today ... 3 times: Do not fear ... Do not fear .... Do not fear.

Again I look to Jesus' words reminding us of the sparrow's worth: God cares for even the lowly sparrow.

That gives me grace to pick up my cross and carry on.

We return to the well and we are renewed ... At baptism in the water and the Word we have been claimed. God tells us "you are mine." We return to this well to be renewed. Again and again. And then we carry on.



I'm thinking of re-writing the lyrics to last weeks' song:

They'll know we are Christians because we screw up, but God doesn't give up on us

And they'll know we are Christians because God has claimed us as family

Yes, they'll know we are Christians because of God's love

It's not quite as zippy as the original. But it does take us back to the source of the love we might be known by. AMEN.

SONG "Goodness Is Stronger than Evil" # 721 (two times)

*Goodness is stronger than evil;  
Love is stronger than hate;  
Light is stronger than darkness;  
Life is stronger than death;*

*Victory is ours, victory is ours  
through Him who loves us.  
Victory is ours, victory is ours  
through Him who loves us.*

#### OUR RESPONSE TO THE WORD

- Prayer of Confession – We return to the well ... the font ... the renewing water of our baptism.

God has given us the ministry of reconciliation. Therefore, let us be reconciled to God and to one another. Gracious God, have mercy on us. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things done and left undone. Uphold us by your Spirit so that we may live and serve you in newness of life, to the honor and glory of your holy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

#### GOD'S RESPONSE TO US

Hear then God's response and let us be renewed by the promise of our baptism: God who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace we have been saved. In the name of + Jesus Christ our sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen us with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in our hearts through faith. **AMEN.**

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Each short prayer will end with the words "Lord in your mercy" and you can make the prayer your own by responding "**hear our prayer.**"

Called into unity with one another and the whole creation. Let us pray for our shared world.

*A brief silence.*

Expansive God, you bring diverse voices together to form your church. Open our hearts and unstop our ears to learn from one another, that differences might not overshadow our baptismal unit. Open our eyes to recognize racism and give us the courage and words to speak out when needed. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Providing God, your creation shows us that life comes from death. Renew the places where our land air, and waterways have been ill for too long. Direct the work of all who care for birds and their habitats. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Protecting God, sustain and keep safe all who work to defend others across the world. Help the members of our police force to serve and protect all citizens with respect and care. Revive and strengthen organizations dedicated to caring for refugees and migrants while their homelands struggle for peace. We pray especially for the Alhamad/Wahid family and the Iqbal family. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Loving God, you promise to be with all who are persecuted for your sake. Guide all who speak your word of justice and console any who are tormented or targeted for being who they are. We pray especially for those who are targeted because of the colour of their skin, their ethnicity, their gender, or sexual orientation and identity. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Compassionate God, you are with us and we are never alone. Bless all fathers and father figures who strive to love and nurture as you do. Comfort all who long to be fathers and all for whom this day is difficult. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Healing God, console, heal, and nourish all in need especially Clayton, Logan, William, Marcus, Brody, Karin, Anthony, Robert, Curtis, Linda, Marci, Earl, Janet, Gayle, Evelyn, Lisa, Danielle, Inger, Deanna, Carol, Wilma, Mary, Marlene, those who feel a sense of isolation, and all who we name aloud or in the silence of our hearts .....

*(pause so people listening from home can add names) .....*

May God's loving care bring healing. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

God of hope, we thank you for the many who serve to bring care and healing during this time of pandemic. Give us patience as we seek to learn what our "new normal" is. Give us compassion and wisdom so that we might treat each other with respect. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

God of companionship, as we keep our distance from one another and cover our faces with masks teach us how to love one another in word and deed. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

God of compassion, you comfort us in our grief with the promise of the resurrection. We pray for Jennie Sukut's family; Kevin Ogilvie, Jann Boyd and family; Georgina Krenn's family; and the family of Caron Parke. Hold them all in your care. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Receive these prayers, O God, and those too deep for words; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Pastor Marilyn: Knowing how God loves us as a Mother and Father we pray in the words Jesus taught us:

#### LORD'S PRAYER

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.

## BLESSING

Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor heights, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

God, the creator, + Jesus, the Christ, and the Holy Spirit, the comforter, bless you and keep you in eternal life. AMEN.

## SENDING SONG “Lift High the Cross” # 660 (verses 1-3)

### Refrain:

Lift high the cross  
 The love of Christ proclaim,  
 Till all the world  
 Adore his sacred name.

1. Come, Christians, follow  
 Where our captain trod,  
 Our king victorious,  
 Christ, the son of God ... /refrain

2. All newborn servants  
 Of the Crucified  
 Bear on their brow  
 The seal of him who died. ... /refrain

3. O Lord, once lifted  
 On the glorious tree,  
 As Thou hast promised  
 Draw the world to Thee. ... /refrain

## DISMISSAL

You are the church. Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. Christ is with you!  
**Thanks be to God.**