



THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

June 21, 2020

We are still the body of Christ even though we are unable to gather for public worship during this time of world-wide crisis. While we cannot be together in person around our Lord's Table, we can hear the word of God and hold each other in prayer.

God does not promise that the path of discipleship will be easy. Jeremiah feels the pain of rejection from those who do not want to hear what he has to say. Jesus of Nazareth declares that his words may bring stark division. Even so, we need not be afraid for God accounts for each hair on our heads. Though we may experience rejection, frustration, division, and death, God's grace and love make us a new creation each day. Marked with the cross and filled with the holy food of God's Word, we are sent from worship to witness to Christ in the world.

Prelude

Sonata in G Major

Domenico Scarlatti
(1685-1757)

Hymn

O Christ, Your Heart, Compassionate



- 1 O Christ, your heart, com - pas - sion - ate, bore ev - 'ry hu - man pain.
- 2 As once you wel - comed those cast down and healed the sick, the blind,
- 3 O Christ, cre - ate new hearts in us that beat in time with yours,
- 4 O Love that made the dis - tant stars, yet marks the spar - row's fall,



Its beat - ing was the pulse of God; its breadth, God's vast do - main.
so may all bruised and bro - ken lives through us your help still find.
that, joined by faith with your great heart, be - come love's o - pen doors.
whose arms stretched wide up - on a cross em - brace and bear us all:



The heart of God, the heart of Christ com - bined in per - fect rhyme
Lord, join our hearts with those who weep that none may weep a - lone,
We are your bod - y, ris - en Christ; our hearts, our hands we yield
come, make your church a ser - vant church that walks your ser - vant ways,



to write God's love in hu - man deeds, e - ter - ni - ty in time.
and help us bear an - oth - er's pain as though it were our own.
that through our life and min - is - try your love may be re - vealed.
whose deeds of love rise up to you, a sac - ri - fice of praise!

Text: Herman G. Stuempfle Jr., 1923-2007

Music: ELLACOMBE, German melody, 18th cent.; adapt. X. L. Hartig, *Melodien zum Mainzer Gesangbuche*, 1833
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Apostolic Greeting

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

Prayer of the Day

Teach us, good Lord God, to serve you as you deserve, to give and not to count the cost, to fight and not to heed the wounds, to toil and not to seek for rest, to labor and not to ask for reward, except that of knowing that we do your will, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

WE GATHER AROUND THE WORD AND PRAYERS

First Lesson - Jeremiah 20:7-13

Jeremiah accuses God of forcing him into a ministry that brings him only contempt and persecution. Yet, Jeremiah is confident that God will be a strong protector against his enemies and commits his life into God's hands.

- ⁷O LORD, you have enticed me, and I was enticed;
you have overpowered me, and you have prevailed.
I have become a laughingstock all day long;
everyone mocks me.
- ⁸For whenever I speak, I must cry out,
I must shout, "Violence and destruction!"
For the word of the LORD has become for me
a reproach and derision all day long.
- ⁹If I say, "I will not mention him, or speak any more in his name,"
then within me there is something like a burning fire
shut up in my bones;
I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot.
- ¹⁰For I hear many whispering:
"Terror is all around!
Denounce him! Let us denounce him!"
All my close friends are watching for me to stumble.
"Perhaps he can be enticed,
and we can prevail against him, and take our revenge on him."
- ¹¹But the LORD is with me like a dread warrior;
therefore my persecutors will stumble, and they will not prevail.
They will be greatly shamed, for they will not succeed.
Their eternal dishonor will never be forgotten.
- ¹²O LORD of hosts, you test the righteous,
you see the heart and the mind;
let me see your retribution upon them,
for to you I have committed my cause.
- ¹³Sing to the LORD; praise the LORD!
For he has delivered the life of the needy
from the hands of evildoers.

Psalm 69:8-11, 18-20

An individual who is sunk in distress and reproach calls upon the Lord for rescue.

Surely, for your sake have I suffered reproach,
and shame has covered my face.
⁹I have become a stranger to my own kindred,
an alien to my mother's children.
¹⁰Zeal for your house has eaten me up;
the scorn of those who scorn you has fallen upon me.
¹¹I humbled myself with fasting,
but that was turned to my reproach.
¹⁸Answer me, O LORD, for your love is kind;
in your great compassion, turn to me."
¹⁹Hide not your face from your servant;
be swift and answer me, for I am in distress.
²⁰Draw near to me and redeem me;
because of my enemies deliver me.

Second Lesson - Romans 6:1b-11

In Holy Baptism, we were incorporated into the reality of Christ's death. Our lives in the present are marked and shaped by his crucifixion, just as our lives in the future will be marked and shaped by his resurrection.

^bShould we continue in sin in order that grace may abound? ²By no means! How can we who died to sin go on living in it? ³Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

⁵For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷For whoever has died is freed from sin. ⁸But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. ¹⁰The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. ¹¹So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Holy Gospel - Matthew 10:24-39

Jesus of Nazareth warns his disciples that their ministry in his name will meet with opposition, requiring absolute trust in God and an unswerving commitment to their Lord.

Jesus said to the twelve: ²⁴"A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master; ²⁵it 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! ²⁶So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. ²⁷What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. ²⁸Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. ²⁹Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. ³⁰And even the hairs of your head are all counted. ³¹So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows. ³²Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; ³³but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven. ³⁴Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. ³⁵For 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; ³⁶and one's foes will be members of one's own household. ³⁷Whoever 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; ³⁸and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it."



Sermon

Late last year, the Broadway hit musical “Hamilton” came to the Altria Theater in Richmond. Through a delightful musical blend of rap, hip-hop, pop, jazz, rhythm & blues, ballads, and more, the life and legacy of American founding father Alexander Hamilton unfolded on the stage – his tragic childhood, his gift with words, his passion for justice and revolution, his fearless outspokenness, his desire to be in “The Room Where It Happens,” his own human frailties, and his conflicts with the hesitant, wishy-washy Aaron Burr. Hamilton speaks of his disillusionment with the British, his hopes for the future, and his desire to be remembered – even if it means dying.

Early in Act I – in the song, “My Shot,” – Hamilton and his fellow revolutionaries get energized to lead the colonists out from under the oppressive burdens imposed on the colonies by King George and British rule. Hamilton encourages the group to stand up for what is just, and to wait no longer to work for the cause that they realize is worth living and dying for, a cause greater than themselves, a cause that will make their world a better place. As Hamilton and his friends become bolder and more resolute in their plans, this song reaches a fever pitch with the call to “Rise Up!” It is time to take their shot, to act for that which is most important to them.

There is a message of “rise up” in today’s gospel reading, in which Jesus of Nazareth – like Alexander Hamilton inspiring colonial revolutionaries – preps his closest disciples to rise up. Using words that kindle *spiritual* revolution, Jesus encourages them, in so many words, “Don't be afraid of what others will say about you, rise up! You are on the side of my Father, who knows the sparrow and the number of hairs on your head! If you fear, fear the one with real power, not the presumed powers of this world! It is time to proclaim a better way, a higher power, another kingdom. It is time to decide who you are, where your allegiance lies.”

It’s easy to understand the disciples’ sense of fear, after leaving the security of homes and families and jobs to follow Jesus – the itinerant rabbi – in proclaiming the coming of God’s kingdom. Faithful proclamation and practice of the teachings of Jesus will put them on a collision course with the powers of this world. So, as Jesus prepares his disciples for their mission – and decades later as the gospel writer pens these words to support and encourage his own persecuted community in which families have been torn apart because of the risen Christ – these words build the case for why they should **NOT** let fear master them or hinder their witness.

Fear, however, can be very powerful – as **WE**, too, know so well. From the moment we are born, we learn to fear the world around us, certainly to fear the stranger. Fear is the driving force behind vast segments of our economy and political system. Fear enters our faith journeys as well. We want to be so secure in our faith that we live with brash holy boldness, naming the evils of this world and relying more fully on the grace of God. We want to have the boldness of Alexander Hamilton and “rise up,” but find instead that we are often more like Aaron Burr – wishy-washy and hesitant to act on what we know is right.

Recently, we've seen truths about systemic racism, economic inequity, lopsided healthcare, violence under the guise of peacekeeping gushing out in ways that trouble our consciences. Even when we know that there are injustices, we may be hesitant to speak out. We resist that nudging of the Holy Spirit and the spiritual revolution that the Spirit is trying to bring about in our lives. Our cowardice leads to incomplete allegiance to God and half-hearted devotion to God's kingdom. We think we can hold onto the security of our worldly identity – our family name, our intellect and wit, our financial security, our education, our societal standing – without realizing that by having our hands so full holding these “crutches,” our hands are too full to pick up the cross and follow in the way of our Lord.

Jesus tells his disciples, “What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops.” It's time to tell the world about God's kingdom. It's time to proclaim the Good News, because the truth will be revealed. The whole truth. God's truth, that brings freedom, change, and healing. This is their cause. This is their moment in history. This is their shot to claim who they are as disciples of Jesus. There and only there lies their allegiance. This is the cause for which they are called to live. This is the call, the cause, for which they will die.

In the musical “Hamilton,” there is a glorious, pivotal moment in the song, “My Shot.” At a critical gathering of colonial leaders, abolitionist John Laurens – with these profound words – calls those would-be revolutionaries to lay aside their fear and to act right then for what they know is right:

*Rise up!
When you're living on your knees, you rise up!
Tell your brother that he's gotta rise up!
Tell your sister that she's gotta rise up!*

Today, it is time for **US** – as disciples and followers of Jesus the Christ – to put away our fears about what the world might say – and rise up. Because God raised up our Lord from death and the grave, we, too, are raised up from the death and grave of Holy Baptism to be take our shot against those things that separate us from God and each other. It is time to give **OUR** complete allegiance to the almighty, all-powerful creator of heaven and earth – and rise up. It is time to trust that God cares for us enough to know the hairs on our heads and the burdens in our hearts – and rise up. It is time to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with a world that needs to know a better way – and rise up. It is time to combat evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves – and rise up. It is time to tell of God's grace and love in the light, to proclaim it from the rooftops – and rise up to help “justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.” Sisters and brothers in Christ, let us rise up!
Amen

1 Oh, praise the gracious pow'r
that tumbles walls of fear
and gathers in one house of faith
all strangers far and near:

Refrain

We praise you, Christ!
Your cross has made us one!

2 Oh, praise persistent truth
that opens fist'd minds
and eases from their anxious clutch
the prejudice that blinds: *Refrain*

3 Oh, praise inclusive love,
encircling ev'ry race,
oblivious to gender, wealth,
to social rank or place: *Refrain*

4 Oh, praise the word of faith
that claims us as God's own,
a living temple built on Christ,
our rock and cornerstone: *Refrain*

5 Oh, praise the tide of grace
that laps at ev'ry shore
with visions of a world at peace,
no longer bled by war: *Refrain*

6 Oh, praise the pow'r, the truth,
the love, the word, the tide.
Yet more than these, oh, praise their source,
praise Christ the crucified: *Refrain*

7 Oh, praise the living Christ
with faith's bright songful voice!
Announce the gospel to the world
and with these words rejoice: *Refrain*

Text: Thomas H. Troeger, b. 1945

Text from *New Hymns for the Lectionary* © 1984 Oxford University Press, Inc.

The Prayers

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

Welcoming and inclusive God, you bring diverse voices together to form your Church across the world. Open our hearts and unstop our ears to learn from one another, that differences might not overshadow our baptismal unity.

Providing God, your creation shows us that life comes from death. Help us renew the places where our land, air, and waterways have been ill for too long. Direct the work of all who care for our earth and its inhabitants.

Healing God, pour out your life-giving power on all who are sick and suffering. Guide researchers who are seeking vaccines, treatments, and cures. Protect those whose jobs expose them to contagion. Support our health care workers.

Protecting God, sustain and keep safe all who work to defend others across the world. Revive and strengthen organizations dedicated to caring for refugees and migrants while their homelands struggle for stability and peace.

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. Lead us to ways of life that are free from racial and ethnic prejudice.

Reigning God, you bless us with guides and caretakers in the faith. As we give thanks for those who have died, increase our care for one another until we walk with them in newness of life.

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

WE WORSHIP WITH OUR OFFERINGS

The needs of Holy Trinity's mission and ministry are ongoing during these times of upheaval and turmoil. Many of our outreach ministry partnerships are facing increased requests for services. May we be faithful and generous as we support our mission "to care actively in the name of Jesus Christ."

Offerings may be mailed to the church or dropped off at the church office.

You may also use the online giving portal on our website.

Go to www.holytrinitylynchburg.org and click on "Give."

You may also download the "GivePlus Church" app for your smart phone from Apple or Google.

Offertory Prayer

Merciful Father, we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us – our selves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Lord's Prayer

*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,
forever and ever. Amen*

Blessing

Almighty God, Father, ✙ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. Amen

Dismissal

Our service now begins. Go in peace. Serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Sonata in D Major

Domenico Scarlatti

Today, a candle is lit in the *Globusleuchter* in memory of Elly Emsley who died on Saturday.
We give thanks for her life and keep her family in our prayers.

The altar flowers are given to the glory of God
by Edwin Clever
in celebration of Chad, Christopher, Theresa, and Tara.



The candles are given to the glory of God
by Wilma and Les Beebe
in honor of Theresa Beebe Novotny's birthday.

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Lynchburg, Virginia

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