



# AN AGAPE LITURGY

Christ Episcopal Church • Cape Girardeau, Missouri

10:15 a.m. service live-stream

**August 30, 2020**

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY  
AFTER PENTECOST

## **Gathering: Liturgy of the Word**

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Prelude "Fugue in G Minor" J. S. Bach

Opening Hymn #450 All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name

## **Opening Rite: Liturgy of the Light**

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*All stand, and the Officiant greets the people with these words:*

**Officiant:** Dear friends in the risen Christ, we gather today to celebrate the Lord's Day, and for a time to be united in prayer and praise with each other and those who have gone before us. Sunday has been called the Lord's Day because it was on this day that Jesus conquered sin and death and rose to new life. As we gather in person and online], let us be united in the spirit of Christ with the Church around the world and celebrate our redemption in Christ's suffering, death and resurrection.

*Silence may be kept for a time.*

**Officiant:** Light and peace, in Jesus Christ our Lord.

**People:** Thanks be to God.

*The following passage of Scripture may be read:*

Jesus said, "You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

*(Matthew 5:14-16)*

## **Prayer for Christ's Light**

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*Candles may now be lit using the following prayer.*

*Officiant:* O God, we give thanks for the gift of your light — shining on the first day of creation, guiding us through the wilderness, leading us to the land of promise.

*People:* You sent Jesus, light of the world, to be our way of truth and life. Help us to follow him each day and rest in him each night until at last we come to live with you in endless light. Through Jesus Christ our Lord and with the Holy Spirit we give you honor and glory, now and always. **Amen.**

## **The Confession**

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*As we worship we ask God's forgiveness for things done and things left undone and things done on our behalf so that we are reconciled to God and each other.*

*Officiant:* Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbors.

*Silence is kept for a time.*

*Officiant:* Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed; By what we have done, and by what we have left undone.

*People:* We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.

*Officiant:* For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us;

*People:* That we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. **Amen.**

*Officiant:* Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life. **Amen.**

## Opening Acclamation

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*Officiant:* Blessed be the one, holy, and living God.

*People:* Glory to God for ever and ever. *Amen.*

## Collect for Purity

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*Officiant:* Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Hymn of Praise

#450 What Wondrous Love Is This

## The Collect of the Day

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*Officiant:* The Lord be with you.

*People:* And also with you.

*Officiant:* Lord of all power and might, the author and giver of all good things: Graft in our hearts the love of your Name; increase in us true religion; nourish us with all goodness; and bring forth in us the fruit of good works; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. *Amen.*

## The Readings

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The First Reading: Exodus 3:1–15

Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. Then Moses said, “I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up.” When the LORD saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am.” Then he said, “Come no closer! Remove the sandals

from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.” He said further, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

Then the LORD said, “I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them. So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.”

But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?” He said, “I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain.” But Moses said to God, “If I come to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?” God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” He said further, “Thus you shall say to the Israelites, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” God also said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the Israelites, ‘The LORD, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you’:

This is my name forever,  
and this my title for all generations.

*Lector:* The Word of the Lord.

*People:* **Thanks be to God.**

The Response: Psalm 105:1–6, 23–26, 45c

<sup>1</sup> **G**IVE thanks to the LORD and call upon his Name; \*  
make known his deeds among the peoples.

- 2 Sing to him, sing praises to him, \*  
and speak of all his marvelous works.
- 3 Glory in his holy Name; \*  
let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice.
- 4 Search for the LORD and his strength; \*  
continually seek his face.
- 5 Remember the marvels he has done, \*  
his wonders and the judgments of his mouth,
- 6 O offspring of Abraham his servant, \*  
O children of Jacob his chosen.
- 23 Israel came into Egypt, \*  
and Jacob became a sojourner in the land of Ham.
- 24 The LORD made his people exceedingly fruitful; \*  
he made them stronger than their enemies;
- 25 Whose heart he turned, so that they hated his people, \*  
and dealt unjustly with his servants.
- 26 He sent Moses his servant, \*  
and Aaron whom he had chosen.
- 45 Hallelujah!

## The Epistle: Romans 12:9–21

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with

all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” No, “if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads.” Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

*Lector:* The Word of the Lord.

*People:* Thanks be to God.

Gospel Hymn

I Have Decided to Follow Jesus

(See bulletin p.12)

### The Gospel: Matthew 16:21–28

Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you.” But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.”

Then Jesus told his disciples, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life?”

“For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay everyone for what has been done. Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”

*Lector:* The Word of the Lord.

*People:* Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Kent Miller

## **Affirmation of Faith**

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Originally the entire service was viewed as our confession of faith. Since the sixth century, however, the church has recited either the Nicene Creed or the Apostle's Creed at the Eucharist. The word "creed" comes from the Latin *credo*, for "I believe" or "I lend my heart to." Either the Nicene Creed, the Apostle's Creed, or the following may be used:

*Officiant:* Let us affirm our faith. Do you believe in God?

*People:* We believe in God the Father the almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth.

*Officiant :* Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

*People:* We believe in Jesus Christ,  
God's only Son our Lord,  
who was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit  
and born of the Virgin Mary.  
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died and was buried.  
He descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again.  
He ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of God.  
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

*Officiant:* Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

*People:* We believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. *Amen.*

## **The Prayers of the People**

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Bound together in Christ in the communion of the Holy Spirit, let us pray with one heart and mind to our God, saying:

*Holy Trinity, hear us.*

That the love which passes ceaselessly between the Father and the Son in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit may renew and deepen the

life of each Christian and draw us all gathered here into your unending life, we pray:

*Holy Trinity, hear us.*

For the leaders of the church (especially our Bishop, Deon), and for the leaders of the nations (especially our President, Donald), that they may discern the ways to overcome divisions and mistrust, and may reflect your unity in every aspect of common life, we pray:

*Holy Trinity, hear us.*

That your self-disclosure in Christ and your enduring presence among us as Spirit may help us to understand both you and ourselves, made in your image and likeness, we pray:

*Holy Trinity, hear us.*

For our families, our households, and our communities, that they may be places of communion and mutual support, which build us up and strengthen us in grace and truth, we pray:

*Holy Trinity, hear us.*

Thankful for our world which you made through Christ, and renewed in the power of his resurrection, that we may be wise and careful stewards of creation, we pray:

*Holy Trinity, hear us.*

In the power of the Spirit who joins our prayer to Christ's enduring intercession, we pray for the sick, the suffering, and all who stand in need, especially those we name now, both aloud and in our hearts. [Silence] For healing for all the world we pray:

*Holy Trinity, hear us.*

For those who have asked for our prayers, and for those whose burden is too deep for words, we pray:

*Holy Trinity, hear us.*

Gracious God, whom Jesus called Abba, Father, accept our prayers this morning. By the inner workings of your Spirit, deepen our communion with you, the source and goal of our life, and make us more and more signs of your enduring love. This we pray through Christ, who lives and works with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. *Amen.*



## The Lord's Prayer

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*Officiant:* Let us pray in the way that Christ taught us:

*People:* 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,  
the power and the glory,  
for ever and ever. *Amen.*

## The Agape

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*While sharing a common Eucharistic celebration is not possible at this time, this liturgy expresses our longing for a time when we can once more share and gather together at the Eucharistic table. This practice of giving thanks for bread, wine and food is ancient, going back to the hospitality our ancestor Abraham showed to his visitors. While not the full celebration of the Holy Eucharist, there is a relationship, in much the same way that giving thanks over water is a reminder of our Baptism.*

*Instrumental music may be played or a hymn sung. A suitable space is prepared with wine, bread, and other foods.*

*The Officiant and people give thanks for the gift of wine.*

*Officiant:* Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the universe.

*People:* You create the fruit of the vine; we long for the day when you will once again refresh us with the cup of salvation in the Blood of your Son Jesus Christ. Glory to you for ever and ever. *Amen.*

*The Officiant and people give thanks for the gift of our daily bread.*

*Officiant:* Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the universe.

*People:* You bring forth bread from the earth; we long for the day when we may once again partake of the bread of life the Body of your Son Jesus Christ. As grain scattered upon the earth is gathered into one loaf, so gather your Church in every place into the kingdom of your Son. To you be glory and power forever and ever. *Amen.*

*The Officiant and people give thanks for the gift of food.*

*Officiant:* Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the universe.

*People:* You have blessed the earth to bring forth food to satisfy our hunger. Let this food strengthen us in the Eucharistic fast that is before us, that following our Savior in the way of the cross, we may come to the joy of his resurrection. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, now and for ever. *Amen.*

## **The Conclusion**

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*Officiant:* God of all creation, we gather on this first day of the week made holy by the resurrection of Christ, your Son. In the waters of baptism we were buried with him so that we might also rise with him and so share his victory over sin and death.

*People:* You have transformed our lives into the living stones that form your Church with Christ as the foundation stone. Strengthen our community's bond of communion and peace and deepen our solidarity with your Church throughout the world.

*Officiant:* Rekindle within us this Sabbath day the vision of your kingdom so that our daily concerns and labor may find their proper perspective.

*People:* Fill our homes with the spirit of the Gospel and give us the grace to see the face of Christ in the people with whom we live. We raise our voices in praise and thanksgiving to you, O God; that we who have celebrated Christ's resurrection this day share in his eternal glory

where he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

## **The Peace**

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*The Peace is exchanged.*

**Officiant:** The peace of Christ be always with you.

**People:** **And also with you.**

*We greet each other in the name of the risen Christ.*

*Here at Christ Church we consider gratitude and generosity to be spiritual disciplines. While we can't be together to pass the collection plate to one another in church at this time, we encourage you to offer your gifts and service in any way that makes the most sense to you.*

[Click here](#) to contribute to our ongoing ministry by donating online.

Final Hymn                    #707 Take My Life, and Let It Be Consecrated

## **The Sending**

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

**People:** *Amen. Alleluia!*

**Officiant:** Let us bless the Lord. *Alleluia, Alleluia!*

**People:** **Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia!**

Postlude                                    “Prelude”                                    J. S. Bach

*A simple meal may now be shared.*

Don't forget to join us at 12 p.m. for Virtual Coffee Hour after the service!

**Link:** <https://bit.ly/2Yjv7YV>

**Password:** coffeetime

You can also dial in by telephone: Just call (312) 626-6799 and enter the Meeting ID 979 4119 5732. For those joining us by telephone, the password will be 0023717181.

# I Have Decided to Follow Jesus

1. I have de - cid - ed \_\_\_\_\_ to fol - low Je - sus, \_\_\_\_\_  
 2. Though no one join me, \_\_\_\_\_ still I will fol - low, \_\_\_\_\_  
 3. The world be - hind me, \_\_\_\_\_ the cross be - fore me, \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_ I have de - cid - ed \_\_\_\_\_ to fol - low Je - sus, \_\_\_\_\_  
 2. \_\_\_\_\_ Though no one join me, \_\_\_\_\_ still I will fol - low, \_\_\_\_\_  
 3. \_\_\_\_\_ The world be - hind me, \_\_\_\_\_ the cross be - fore me, \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_ I have de - cid - ed \_\_\_\_\_ to fol - low Je - sus, \_\_\_\_\_  
 2. \_\_\_\_\_ Though no one join me, \_\_\_\_\_ still I will fol - low, \_\_\_\_\_  
 3. \_\_\_\_\_ The world be - hind me, \_\_\_\_\_ the cross be - fore me, \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ No turn - ing back, \_\_\_\_\_ no turn - ing back! \_\_\_\_\_  
 (no turn - ing back,)

Words: Ascribed to an Indian Prince; as sung in Garo, Assam

Music: Indian Folk Melody; arr. Norman Johnson

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## Notes on the Service

Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 17)

Exod. 3:1-15 • Ps. 105:1-6, 23-26, 45c

Rom. 12:9-21 • Matt. 16:21-28

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Today's collect, from an 8th-century manuscript, is an extended metaphor of the gardener-God: the divine fruits which are good works are grown in us by God who grafts, nourishes, and faithfully tends us.

Moses' call from the burning bush is an awe-filled occasion comparable with the calls of Isaiah and Ezekiel. Having fled Egypt because he had been identified as the killer of an Egyptian, Moses has taken refuge in remote Midian, married a Midianite woman and herds sheep for her father. On Mt. Horeb/Sinai, the Lord appears to Moses and orders him to free his people from Egypt. Unlike appearances of God in Genesis, this epiphany comes not through a human figure nor a dream, but through a supernatural fire. Henceforth fire will be God's principal medium of disclosure to Moses, who had been drawn out of water. **I AM WHO I AM**, or **I WILL BE WHO I WILL BE**, could mean, "I cause what happens," or it could mean "my Name is not for you mortals to know," like the answer Jacob got when he asked for God's Name. Later metaphysicians would take **I AM** to mean that God is Pure Being, a category of thought unfamiliar to the Exodus authors.

Psalm 105 is a recital of the formative events of Israelite history. Today's excerpt is the prelude of praise (vv.1-6), and then the section about the Jacob tribes' stay in Egypt from Joseph's time to Moses' time.

The epistle continues last Sunday's advice from Paul about how church members are to treat each other. Love, zeal, patience, generosity, and humility are chief virtues; Paul quotes Deuteronomy and Proverbs against taking vengeance.

Someone who did not take vengeance was David Pendleton Oakerhater, a Cheyenne warrior, who was converted to Christianity in a U.S. army detention camp in 1878, was ordained deacon and went to his tribe in Oklahoma whom he served as church-founder, pastor, and teacher, earning from them the title "God's Warrior." He died in 1931, when the Lord had accomplished in Oakerhater what today's collect asks. His feast will be September 1st.

In last Sunday's Gospel, Peter confessed Jesus was the Messiah, and for that Jesus congratulated Peter and renamed him the Rock. Today Jesus is beginning to teach that he is not the [commonly-anticipated] messiah king who will liberate Jews from the Romans, but instead he is to be a messiah who suffers. Peter objects that Jesus' definition of messiahship is preposterous; Jesus rebukes Peter as vehemently as he had previously praised him. Last, Jesus introduces his key paradox of victory through defeat.

— Rev. Stephen Weissman  
St. Louis, Missouri