



AN AGAPE LITURGY

Christ Episcopal Church
Cape Girardeau, Missouri

10:15 a.m. service live-stream

October 25, 2020

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST

Gathering: Liturgy of the Word

Prelude “Arioso” Darwin Wolford

Opening Hymn #423 Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

Opening Rite: Liturgy of the Light

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

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

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

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

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

Collect for Purity

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

#602 Jesu, Jesu

The Collect of the Day

Officiant: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Officiant: Almighty and everlasting God, increase in us the gifts of faith, hope, and charity; and, that we may obtain what you promise, make us love what you command; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

The Readings

The First Reading: Deuteronomy 34:1–12

Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, which is opposite Jericho, and the Lord showed him the whole land: Gilead as far as Dan, all Naphtali, the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the Western Sea, the Negeb, and the Plain – that is, the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees – as far as Zoar. The LORD said to him, “This is the land of which I swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, ‘I will give it to your descendants’; I have let you see it with your eyes, but you shall not cross over there.” Then Moses, the

servant of the LORD, died there in the land of Moab, at the LORD's command. He was buried in a valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth-peor, but no one knows his burial place to this day. Moses was one hundred twenty years old when he died; his sight was unimpaired and his vigor had not abated. The Israelites wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days; then the period of mourning for Moses was ended.

Joshua son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, because Moses had laid his hands on him; and the Israelites obeyed him, doing as the LORD had commanded Moses.

Never since has there arisen a prophet in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face. He was unequalled for all the signs and wonders that the LORD sent him to perform in the land of Egypt, against Pharaoh and all his servants and his entire land, and for all the mighty deeds and all the terrifying displays of power that Moses performed in the sight of all Israel.

Lector: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

The Response: Psalm 90:1–6, 13–17

- 1 LORD, you have been our refuge *
from one generation to another.
- 2 Before the mountains were brought forth,
or the land and the earth were born, *
from age to age you are God.
- 3 You turn us back to the dust and say, *
“Go back, O child of earth.”
- 4 For a thousand years in your sight
are like yesterday when it is past *
and like a watch in the night.
- 5 You sweep us away like a dream; *
we fade away suddenly like the grass.
- 6 In the morning it is green and flourishes; *
in the evening it is dried up and withered.

- 13 Return, O LORD; how long will you tarry? *
be gracious to your servants.
- 14 Satisfy us by your loving-kindness in the morning; *
so shall we rejoice and be glad all the days of our life.
- 15 Make us glad by the measure of the days
that you afflicted us *
and the years in which we suffered adversity.
- 16 Show your servants your works *
and your splendor to their children.
- 17 May the graciousness of the LORD our God be upon us; *
prosper the work of our hands;
prosper our handiwork.
for the LORD our God is the Holy One.

The Epistle: 1 Thessalonians 2:1-8

You yourselves know, brothers and sisters, that our coming to you was not in vain, but though we had already suffered and been shamefully mistreated at Philippi, as you know, we had courage in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in spite of great opposition. For our appeal does not spring from deceit or impure motives or trickery, but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the message of the gospel, even so we speak, not to please mortals, but to please God who tests our hearts. As you know and as God is our witness, we never came with words of flattery or with a pretext for greed; nor did we seek praise from mortals, whether from you or from others, though we might have made demands as apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, like a nurse tenderly caring for her own children. So deeply do we care for you that we are determined to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you have become very dear to us.

Lector: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

The Gospel: Matthew 22:34–46



Officiant: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew.

People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.

When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. “Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” He said to him, “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them this question: “What do you think of the Messiah? Whose son is he?” They said to him, “The son of David.” He said to them, “How is it then that David by the Spirit calls him Lord, saying,

‘The Lord said to my Lord,
“Sit at my right hand,
until I put your enemies under your feet”’?

If David thus calls him Lord, how can he be his son?” No one was able to give him an answer, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

Officiant: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Sermon

Rev. Annette Joseph

Affirmation of Faith

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

God of abundance, in this season of harvest we thank you for farmers and fieldworkers, for those who grow our food and those whose labor brings it to our table. For what else do the People of God offer thanks? [*Prayers of thanksgiving may be spoken*]. Almighty Creator, bless this earth and teach us to become reverent caretakers of your holy gifts.

People: O Lord, hear our prayer.

God of steadfast love, we pray for your universal Church, both here at home and far away. Bind us together with cords of kindness, forgiveness, and fidelity, that we may be of one heart and mind in the service of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

People: O Lord, hear our prayer.

God of compassion, we pray for those in hospitals and hospices, for those struggling with addiction and mental illness, and for all who are sick and suffering, especially those we name now, both aloud and in our hearts: [*Prayers for the sick and suffering may be spoken*]. Bring them comfort, O God, as we entrust them to your loving care.

People: O Lord, hear our prayer.

God of lost things, we pray for the anxious and the afraid, for those who are confused and those who are conflicted, and for all who need your holy guidance, especially those we name now, both aloud and in our hearts: [*Prayers for guidance may be spoken*]. Grant them wisdom and discernment, O God of all truth, that they may find strength and clarity of purpose.

People: O Lord, hear our prayer.

God of Resurrection life, we remember those who have died, especially those we name now, both aloud and in our hearts: [*Prayers for the dead may be spoken*]. May we, together with these and all the faithful departed, joyfully be reunited at the banquet table of your coming Kingdom. ***Amen.***

The Lord's Prayer

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

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.

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

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

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.

The Sending

Officiant: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, 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

“In Joyful Praise”

Laurence Lyon

A simple meal may now be shared.



Click here at Noon to
Join us for Virtual
Coffee Hour

A Note about the Icon



The icon featured prominently near the front of the church this week was dedicated to the memory of CEC parishioner John Hudak, who passed away this spring. Depicting Jesus washing the disciples' feet, the icon was intended to reflect John's humble and loving service. We are grateful to Jason and Terri Hudak for helping us to celebrate John's memory in this way. Thanks be to God!

Notes on the Service

Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 25)

Deut. 34:1-12 • Ps. 90:1-6, 13-17 • 1 Thess. 2:1-8 • Matt. 22:34-46

The 7th-cent. collect asks for faith, hope, and love [charity], the three theological virtues (as they came later to be called), listed in I Thess., listed once at the Letter's opening read last Sunday, and again at its close, to be read on Nov. 15. Having them, we shall obtain what God promises because we shall have been loving what God desires.

The Torah, the five Books of Moses, concludes with Moses' death. From Mt Pisgah, Moses surveys the land which Israel will claim as its inheritance, although it would in Biblical times never actually stretch as far as the "Western Sea," the Mediterranean. Martin Luther King's speech "I have been to the mountain-top" refers to this scene.

The Hebrew text says, *he buried him*. That phrase can be the equivalent of an English passive, *he was buried*, which is the way the NRSV translates it. The Jewish Publication Society translates it literally, *He buried him*, meaning God buried Moses, as a number of ancient commentators read it. According to II Maccabees when the first temple was destroyed, Jeremiah hid the ark on Mt Nebo near Moses' grave, to be discovered on judgment day. The New Testament Epistle of Jude says that the Archangel Michael and the devil contended for Moses' body. A book by a first century Pharisee asserted that Moses had ascended, not died.

Ps 90:1-6 laments that human life is brief and fragile. The omitted vv 7-12 state that God limits our life span to eighty years. Some rabbis claimed Moses wrote that, although Deut. says Moses lived to be 120. Vv 13-17 pray for rescue from some national disaster.

Paul defends his conduct when he had been in Thessalonika. After he had left, Paul's detractors had accused him of error, greed, or guile. He had sent Timothy back there to refute them. Timothy had then reported to Paul that those converts had now been confirmed in the faith.

The debate between Jesus and the temple officials ends as he quotes Deut. and Lev. to summarize the Law and Prophets in the same way that Rabbi Hillel had summed them up earlier: Love of God and love of neighbor. Jesus caps the dispute by asking, If the messiah is to be descended from David, why then does Ps. 110, (which they presumed David had written) call the messiah "Lord"? Would David have called his son "Lord"? Jesus might be claiming Davidic credentials, a risky move in Roman-occupied Jerusalem; or Jesus might be saying there is more to messiahship than a Davidic pedigree.

– Rev. Stephen Weissman
St. Louis, Missouri