



Sunday, February 12, 2023

Sixth Sunday after Epiphany

Introduction

In today's reading from Deuteronomy we are called to choose life by loving and obeying God. Much of today's gospel reading echoes portions of the Ten Commandments. Jesus' instructions to the crowd reveal a pattern of behavior that honors both God and the neighbor, resulting in life and health for the whole community. We too are invited to embrace these commandments, not out of fear of retribution, but because God has promised that to do so means life for us.

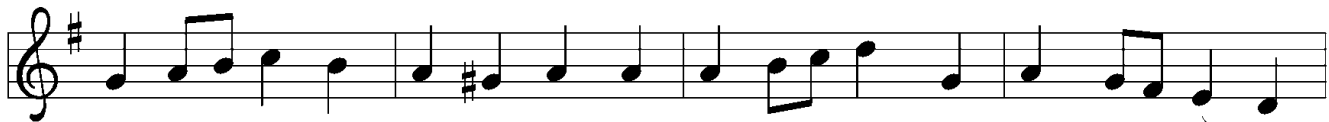
Gathering Hymn..... "Holy Spirit, Ever Dwelling"



1 Ho-ly Spir-it, ev-er dwell-ing in the ho-liest realms of light;
2 Ho-ly Spir-it, ev-er liv-ing as the church's ver-y life;
3 Ho-ly Spir-it, ev-er work-ing through the church's min-is-try;



Ho-ly Spir-it, ev-er brood-ing o'er a world of gloom and night;
Ho-ly Spir-it, ev-er striv-ing through us in a cease-less strife;
quick-'ning, strength-'ning, and ab-solv-ing, set-ting cap-tive sin-ners free;



Ho-ly Spir-it, ev-er rais-ing those of earth to thrones on high;
Ho-ly Spir-it, ev-er form-ing in the church the mind of Christ:
Ho-ly Spir-it, ev-er bind-ing age to age and soul to soul



liv-ing, life-im-part-ing Spir-it, you we praise and mag-ni-fy.
you we praise with end-less wor-ship for your gifts and fruits un-priced.
in com-mu-nion nev-er end-ing, you we wor-ship and ex-tol.

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God, who makes all things new, whose mercy endures forever.

Amen.

Trusting in God's mercy, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Holy One, source of our renewal,

we confess that we are wrapped up in sin, and cannot free ourselves. We have not practiced your righteousness. Our hearts have turned away from you. For the sake of the world you so love, forgive us, that we may be reconciled to one another for the glory of your holy name.

Amen.

Thus says our God: "The former things have come to pass and new things I now declare." God's mercy makes us new. We are forgiven in the name of ✚ Christ our Savior.

Amen.

Prayer of the Day

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray. O God, the strength of all who hope in you, because we are weak mortals we accomplish nothing good without you. Help us to see and understand the things we ought to do, and give us grace and power to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

First Reading: Deuteronomy 30:15-20

The LORD sets before the people of God a clear choice. Life and prosperity will come to the faithful; loss of the land will be the consequence of disobedience. Choosing life entails loving and holding fast to the Lord. Life in God's presence presupposes the promise made to the ancestors.

See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the LORD your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. But if your heart turns away and you do not hear, but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them, I declare to you today that you shall perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, loving the LORD your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him; for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the LORD swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

HERE ENDS THE READING.

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 3:1-9

Human leaders in the church are not the ones who control ministry. Rather they are coworkers who belong to God, the one who truly controls and continuously empowers the ministry of the church.

Brothers and sisters, I could not speak to you as spiritual people, but rather as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for solid food. Even now you are still not ready, for you are still of the flesh. For as long as there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not of the flesh, and behaving according to human inclinations? For when one says, "I belong to Paul," and another, "I belong to Apollos," are you not merely human? What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you came to believe, as the Lord assigned to each. I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. The one who plants and the one who waters have a common purpose, and each will receive wages according to the labor of each. For we are God's servants, working together; you are God's field, God's building.

HERE ENDS THE READING.

Gospel: Matthew 5:21-37

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew

Glory to you, O Lord.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus exhorts his followers to embrace standards of righteousness that exceed legal requirements and traditional expectations.

"You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, 'You shall not murder'; and 'whoever murders shall be liable to judgment.' But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to judgment; and if you insult a brother or sister, you will be liable to the council; and if you say, 'You fool,' you will be liable to the hell of fire. So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift. Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are on the way to court with him, or your accuser may hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison. Truly I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny. "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to go into hell. "It was also said, 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.' But I say to you that anyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery. "Again, you have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, 'You shall not swear falsely, but carry out the vows you have made to the Lord.' But I say to you, Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or

by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. Let your word be 'Yes, Yes' or 'No, No'; anything more than this comes from the evil one."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

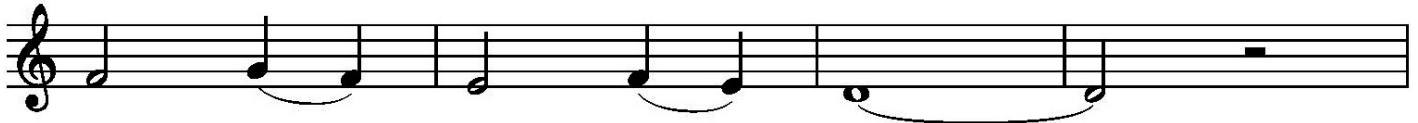
Sermon

Sermon Song..... "Seek Ye First"

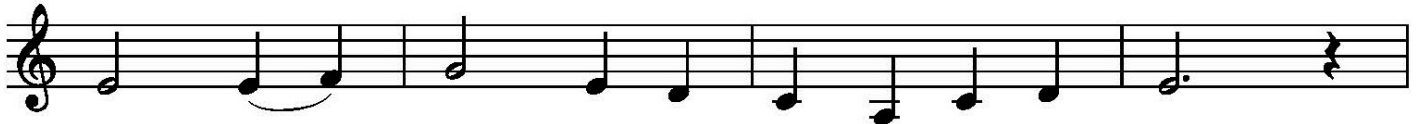
Words and Music by
Karen Lafferty



1. Seek ye ___ first the ___ king - dom of God
2. Man shall not live by ___ bread _ a - lone
3. Ask and it shall be ___ giv - en un - to you,



and His ___ right - eous - ness, _____
but by ___ ev - 'ry ___ word _____
seek and ___ ye shall ___ find, _____



and all these things shall be add - ed un - to you-
that pro - ceeds from the mouth _ of ___ God-
knock and the door shall be o - pened un - to you-



Al - le - lu, al - le - lu - ia!
Al - le - lu, al - le - lu - ia!
Al - le - lu, al - le - lu - ia!

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
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,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I 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

Prayers of Intercession

Called together to follow Jesus, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

Inspire your church that it may be a sign of life throughout the world. From the exploration of faith with children and new believers to missionaries and bishops, shape lives of faithfulness, so that all find abundant life in your ways. Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Nourish your creation. Accompany all who plant and water. Bless the work of farmers; provide for subsistence farmers facing drought and climate change. Guide the work of agricultural scientists toward sustainable ways to feed the world. Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Give growth where there seems to be no hope for life. In nations and regions where reconciliation seems impossible, empower peacemakers with your Spirit. Where death holds sway through violence, disease, and hunger, equip relief workers to bring hope. Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Nurture all in need (*especially Mary Ann, Don, Barbara, Kristy, Larry, Sue Christi, Michael, Jenna, Joe, Dave, Joy, Vicki, Francisco, Jay, Tyler, Norm, Penny, Michael, Jay, Hadlee, Michael, Trisha, Henry, Del, Ruth, Sarah, Gloria, Joan, Lisa, Sumi, Celine, Jim, Jonathan, Michael, Darcie and Gavin*). Bring healing to all who experience trauma caused by systems of injustice and destructive relationships. Give courage to those struggling to repent and those seeking reconciliation. Sustain all who work for restoration. Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Encourage this congregation. Call us to a common purpose and keep us from quarrelling. Turn our hearts toward you and guide our leaders, so that our choices may be lifegiving for all. Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Thanks be to you for the lives of all who have died in Christ (*especially Donald and Dorie*). Teach us to follow them in your ways and gather us with them into the promise of eternal life with you. Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

We bring to you our needs and hopes, O God, trusting your wisdom and power revealed in Christ crucified.

Amen.

Sharing of the Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you all.

And also with you.

Offering

Offering Prayer

Liberating God, you break the bonds of injustice and let the oppressed go free. Receive these offerings in thanksgiving for all your works of merciful power and shape us as people of your justice and freedom. You we magnify and adore, through Jesus our Savior,

Amen.

Thanksgiving at the Table

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

The 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.

Invitation to Communion

Come and taste the joy of God!

Distribution

We will be using the intinction method for distribution. You will be handed bread and asked to dip the bread in the chalice. Gluten-free bread and grape juice are available. Please make your way forward by the center aisle, returning down the side. If mobility is a problem for you, please notify an usher and you will be served at your seat.

Post Communion Prayer

Holy One, we thank you for the healing that springs forth abundantly from this table. Renew our strength to do justice, love kindness, and journey humbly with you.

Amen.

Blessing

The God who faithfully brings forth justice and breaks the oppressor's rod
✠ bless, strengthen, and uphold you, today and always.

Amen.

Sending Song..... "Cry of My Heart"

CHORUS



It is the cry of my heart to fol - low You.



It is the cry of my heart to be close _ to ___ You.



It is the cry of my heart to fol - low all of the days _ of my life. .



— It is the cry of my heart to fol - low You.



It is the cry of my heart to be close _ to ___ You.



It is the cry of my heart to fol - low all of the days _ of my life. .

VERSE



1. Teach me Your ho - ly ways, .
2. O - pen my eyes so I ____



— oh Lord, — so I can walk in Your truth. —
— can see — the won-der - ful things that You do. ____



Teach me Your ho - ly ways, — oh Lord, and make me
O - pen my heart up more — and more and make it



whol - ly de - vot - ed to You. Oh! Oh! Whoa! ____
whol - ly de - vot - ed to You. Oh! Oh! Whoa! ____

CCLI Song # 844980
© 1991 Mercy / Vineyard Publishing
For use solely with the SongSelect® Terms of Use. All rights reserved. www.ccli.com
CCLI License # 1419869

Dismissal
Go in peace. Serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.