

June 7, 2020

American Lutheran Church/Filley

1st Sunday after Pentecost/The Holy Trinity

Genesis 1:1-2:4a

2 Corinthians 13:11-13

Matthew 28:16-20

INVOCATION

CALL TO WORSHIP (attributed to Rev. Nora Vedress)

P: In the midst of the world's chaos come to this place and find peace. When your mind is overwhelmed with what you see come to this place and find hope. If your heart is heavy, with fear, with worry, with sorrow, come to this place and find strength. As you long for community in a world that is torn apart, come to this place and find love. Come people of God, and in this place, in this moment, find peace, hope, strength and love, as we worship and pray together.

C: Amen

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS (attributed to Rev. Susan A. Blain)

P: O God, we confess that the sin of racial hatred and prejudice distorts your divine plan for our human lives: You created us in divine likeness, diverse and beautiful: In every person, every race is your image.

C: But too often we fail to recognize your image in all: Forgive us.

P: You created us in divine freedom, to be free: In every decision, every choice is your possibility of justice.

C: But too often we fail to choose to advocate for your justice for all: Forgive us.

P: You created us for divine abundance, to tend and share: In every garden, every social structure is your seed of community.

C: But too often we fail to create that community which includes all, and gives to all equal access to your abundant life: Forgive us.

P: Forgive us:

C: Open our eyes to distinguish good from evil Open our hearts to desire good over evil Strengthen our wills to choose good over evil, So that we may create among us your beloved community.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

P: Hear the good news: God's gift of grace in Jesus Christ forgives us and sets us free to live full human lives in community. We may go forth confident of the grace to see with new eyes beyond racial prejudice; to imagine with renewed fervor justice and mercy for all, and to create with a new will a community where all are given access to God's abundant life.

C: Thanks be to God!

PRAYER OF THE DAY (This prayer is from For The Love of One Another (1989), a special message from the Bishops' Committee on Black Catholics of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops)

P: Let us pray together,

C: Wake me up Lord, so that the evil of racism finds no home within me. Keep watch over my heart Lord, and remove from me any barriers to your grace, that may oppress and offend my brothers and sisters. Fill my spirit Lord, so that I may give services of justice and peace. Clear my mind Lord, and use it for your glory. And finally, remind us Lord that you said, "blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God." Amen.

1st READING: Genesis 1-2 (Jesus Storybook Bible)

In the beginning, there was nothing. Nothing to hear. Nothing to feel. Nothing to see. Only emptiness. And darkness. And...nothing but nothing. But God was there. And God had a wonderful Plan. "I'll take this emptiness," God said, "and I'll fill it up!" Out of the darkness, I'm going to make light! And out of the nothing, I'm going to make...EVERYTHING!" Like a mommy bird flutters her wings over her eggs to help her babies hatch, God hovered over the deep, silent darkness. He was making life happen. God spoke. That's all. And whatever he said, it happened. God said, "Hello light!" and light shone into the darkness. God called the light, "Day" and the darkness, "Night." "You're good," God said. And they were. Then God said, "Hello land!" and there - splashing up through the oceans - came cliffs, mountains, sandy beaches. "You're good," God said. And they were. "Hello trees!" God said. "Hello grass and flowers!" And everything everywhere burst into life. He made buds; shoots shoot; flowers flower. "You're good," God said. And they were. "Hello stars!" God said. "Hello sun! Hello moon!" And whizzing into the darkness came fiery globes, spinning around and around - whirling orange and purple and golden planets. "You're good," God said. And they were. "Hello birds!" God said. And with a fluttering and flapping and chirping and singing, birds filled the skies. "Hello fish!" God said. And with a darting and dashing and wriggling and splashing, fish filled the seas! "You're good," God said. And they were. Then God said, "Hello animals!" And everyone came out to play. The earth was filled with noisy noises - growling and gobbling and snapping and snorting and happy skerfuffling. "You're good," God said. And they were. God saw all that he had made and he loved them. And they were lovely because he loved them. But God saved the best for last. From the beginning, God had a shining dream in his heart. He would make people to share his Forever Happiness. They would be his children, and the world would be their perfect home. So God breathed life into Adam and Eve. When they opened their eyes, the first thing they ever saw was God's face. And when God saw them he was like a new dad. "You look like me," he said. "You're the most beautiful thing I've ever made!" God loved them with all of his heart. And they were lovely because he loved them. And Adam and Eve joined in the song of the stars and the streams and the wind in the trees, the wonderful song of love to the one who made them. Their hearts were filled with happiness. And nothing ever made them sad or lonely or sick or afraid. God looked at everything he had made. "Perfect!" he said. And it was. But all the stars and the mountains and oceans and galaxies and everything were nothing compared to how much God loved his children. He would move heaven and earth to be near them. Always. Whatever happened, whatever it cost him, he would always love them. And so it was that the wonderful love story began...

2nd READING: 2 Corinthians 1:2; 13:11-13

(Paul closes a challenging letter to the Corinthians with an appeal to Christian fellowship grounded in the triune harmony of Christ's grace, God's love, and the Spirit's partnership.) [Paul writes:] Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Finally, brothers and sisters, farewell. Put things in order, listen to my appeal, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints greet you. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.

GOSPEL: Matthew 28:16-20

(After his resurrection, Jesus summons his remaining disciples and commissions them to baptize and teach all nations in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.) Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw Jesus, they worshiped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

MESSAGE - Pastor LuRae

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

P: Center us now, O God, on your presence among your people, as we lift up our hearts desires, our soul's deep needs, our hungers, fears and failures. Lord in your mercy,

C: HEAR OUR PRAYERS

P: As we have often failed to be obedient to your will in our lives as individual disciples and as church, we pray that you will forgive us and enliven us to be and to do the gospel of Christ. Open us to your Spirit's urgings, and awaken us to live faithfully as your people in a changing and hurting world. Lord in your mercy,

C: HEAR OUR PRAYERS

P: As church, we declare that the enslavement of black bodies and the removal of indigenous peoples established racism in the United States, a truth this nation and this church have yet to fully embrace. Lord in your mercy,

C: HEAR OUR PRAYERS

P: We pray for those around us who need your care, and ask that you would make of us your instruments of healing, peace and redemption. We pray especially for those we name in our hearts at this time. (silence) Lord in your mercy,

C: HEAR OUR PRAYERS

P: Reveal your presence with them and with us, God of life, that as people of renewed faith and vitality, we may be empowered to serve your world, and so give glory to you; for we offer our prayers and our lives in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and taught us to pray...

C: 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.

BENEDICTION

P: May the Lord bless you and keep you. May his face shine upon you with grace and mercy. May He look upon you with favor and grant you peace. In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!