

Sunday Missive – June 14, 2020



The 2nd Sunday After Pentecost

Eternal and gracious God, source of life and light, whose love extends to all people, all creatures, all things, grant us this day and always that reverence for all life which becomes those whose hope is in you, lest we despise, degrade or callously destroy it in any of its forms. Rather let us save, secure and sanctify life, that we may know and share the healing power of love.

Grace to you and peace, from God our Creator and from God's child Jesus; Christ, who was and is and is to come. May God's blessing rain upon you and yours this day, and may your heart be opened to the ever-widening love that alone can sustain the world.

Hymn 693

Just as I am, without one plea, but that thy blood was shed for me,
And that thou bidd'st me come to thee, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, though tossed about with many a conflict, many a doubt;
Fightings and fears within, without, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind; sight, riches, healing of the mind,
Yea, all I need, in thee to find, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, thou wilt receive; wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve,
Because thy promise I believe, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G9oSB3elWY4>

A Reading from the Book of Exodus – Chapter Nineteen

They had entered the wilderness of Sinai, and camped in the wilderness; all Israel camped there at the foot of the mountain. Moses went up the mountain and the Lord called, saying, “Tell the Israelites: ‘You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to safety. Now, if you obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession out of all the peoples. Indeed, the whole earth is mine, but you shall be for me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation.’ So Moses spoke before them all that the Lord had commanded. And the people answered as one: “Everything that the Lord has spoken we will do.”

We all have memories of Geometry class in Junior High – some, of the elegant and satisfying formulas that made sense of shapes and objects in the world; others, of the excruciating feeling of trying to cram into our heads, long enough to pass exams, information about which we had to pretend to care. For most of us, it was, perhaps a little of both. The Mosaic Covenant is one of these formulas, a simple recipe for holy and healthy living. **IF**, Moses reports God as promising: **IF** you obey my voice, **THEN** you shall be my treasured possession out of all the peoples. The world is full of all kinds of peoples, but you shall be priestly and holy amongst them... **IF** you obey my voice.

It’s an offer they can’t refuse. Especially since God has made a security deposit already: bringing them out of Egypt safely. So “the people answered as one: “Everything that the Lord has spoken we will do.” Thus sprang Israel’s self-image as the “Chosen People,” people whose welfare was uniquely cherished by Almighty God. But words are easier than actions. The subsequent history of the

Hebrew Nation comprises a long and troubled succession of events and consequences stemming from their imperfect adherence to the bargain. The prophets, their words set down in scripture, and the secular historians, record one after another the “other shoe” that drops when the covenant is left unmet. **IF** you obey, **THEN** you shall be treasured... **BUT** they did not obey, **HENCE**, matters remained... unresolved, to put it lightly.

“From the beginning, racist Americans have been perfectly content with turning nightmares into dreams, and dreams into nightmares; perfectly content with the law of racial killing and the order of racial disparities. They can’t fathom that racism is America’s nightmare. There can be no American dream amid the American nightmare of anti-black racism—or of anti-Native, anti-Latino, anti-Asian racism—racism causes even white people to become fragile and die of whiteness.” Ibram Kendi

IF the “American Experiment” had led to adherence to our self-professed ideals of equal opportunity, equal justice and equal nurture, **THEN** we might have been a much better nation already, if perhaps not altogether “priestly and holy” in the eyes of God. **BUT** we have not yet come close, **HENCE** our nation remains anguished, dysfunctional and volatile. But **IF** we begin each day or our national life with awareness of the failures that beset us, and with determination to redress them, **THEN** we might just get to be truly good someday. As for greatness, we will forever have to leave that to the Lord.

The following is excerpted from remarks made by Bishop Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows of Indianapolis to a meeting of the Episcopal House of Bishops on June 9.

“So here is the challenge for the Episcopal Church: we need to stop being afraid of committing to the work of dismantling systemic racism and white supremacy. We need to learn and understand how it operates inside the Episcopal Church and in the world. As a predominately white institution that is rooted in the American experiment, we must be unequivocal and clear. Our being afraid of making white people upset makes us complicit in keeping white supremacy in place. We must not be afraid of giving our time and financial resources to the groups who are doing this work on the ground.

Many of our congregations are made up of people who have the power to affect policies, programs and money—if we are not actively dismantling white supremacy as a part of our baptismal ministry, then we ought not write any more statements. If we are not giving away our power and focussing on the voices from the margins, then we ought not be surprised when people of color stop sharing their stories and attending our churches. If we go to Black Lives Matter demonstrations but return to our church buildings to livestream worship surrounded exclusively by white images of Jesus and the saints, then we must understand that we contradict our

actions and become just another performative ally, not helping our people or the movement.

Now is the time for acting. For doing the work of unlearning bias against black and brown people. Our everyday choices: from where we buy groceries, to what we read, to how we adorn our sanctuaries, to where our money goes, to how we vote all add up. It all adds up to a world where people and systems are activated to value and support all of God's children no matter what they look like or where they come from and every choice moves us a little closer to God's dream. Not just the American dream—God's dream. So let's get to work, church. The time is now. Thank you.



can we handle it?

Psalm 116

I love the Lord, because who has heard my **voice*** Who has heard my supplications.

Because God inclined an ear to **me*** I will call on the Lord as long as I **live.**

The snares of death **encompassed me*** The pangs of Sheol brought me **anguish.**

But I called on the name of the **Lord*** "O Lord, I pray, save my **life!"**

Return, O my soul, to your **rest*** For the Lord has dealt bountifully with **you.**

I walk before the Lord in the land of the **living*** I will lift up the cup of **salvation.**

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the sorrow of the **faithful*** What shall I return for all this bounty given to **me?**

O Lord, I am your servant; I am your servant, the child of your **womb*** I will offer you thanksgiving and call upon your precious **name.**

The Prayers of the People

O God

Here we are yet again,
In our rage, our sorrow, our fear.

We are so angry we are tired.
Between the virus and anti-Blackness,
We are perpetually in grief.
We don't know what the future holds.

We are a people of unclean lips.
We live in and accept the Logic of Empire
Its Impulse and Imagination course in our very flesh.
Daily we manifest dehumanization, exclusion, and isolation.

And yet again we are here
In faith, hope, and love.

We seek the wisdom and courage
To sustain and deepen the Solidarity
We see in the Tweets and in the streets.

May the Spirit of Revolutionary Love

Be present among us,
Fall fresh upon us,
And breathe again on each of us.

Transform us Within
So that Black Lives Matter in our hearts and minds.

Transform us Between
So that Black Lives Matter in our relationships.

Transform us Among
So that Black Lives Matter in our institutions and systems.

Transform us Around
So that we may grow a culture where All Black Lives Matter.

May our work today
Not only cultivate Beloved Community,
But help to rebuild the Soul of the World.

Ase. Amīn.
Blessed Be.
Amen.

O God, the creator and preserver of all humankind, we humbly beseech thee for all sorts and conditions of people; that thou wouldst be pleased to make thy ways known unto them, thy saving health unto all nations. More especially we pray for thy holy Church universal; that she may be so guided and governed by thy good Spirit, that all who profess and call themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life. Finally, we commend to thy gracious goodness all those who are in any ways afflicted or distressed, in mind, body, or estate; especially those whose lives are devastated by today's pandemic, that it may please thee to comfort and relieve them according to their several necessities, giving them patience under their sufferings, and a peaceful issue out of all their afflictions. All this we beg for the sake of Christ, Jesus. *Amen.*

Now, let us go – or stay – in peace and love to serve the Lord by serving one another while we can. *Thanks be to God, Alleluia, Alleluia!*

Levas Hymn 1

Lift ev'ry voice and sing 'til earth and heaven ring
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty
Let our rejoicing rise high as the list'ning skies
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun
Let us march on 'til victory is won

Stony the road we trod, bitter the chastening rod
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died
Yet with a steady beat have not our weary feet
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered
Out from the gloomy past 'til now we stand at last
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast

God of our weary years, God of our silent tears
Thou who has brought us thus far on the way
Thou who has by Thy might led us into the light
Keep us forever in the path, we pray
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee
Lest, our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee
Shadowed beneath Thy hand, may we forever stand
True to our God, true to our native land

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8QK4p22LHtw>

Patti LaBelle - *If You Don't Know Me by Now*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tain2OF3Zyg>



About Our Planning Process

We are a long way from sufficient assurances from the medical and scientific community that banding together in our sanctuary on Shasta Avenue would be anything but foolhardy and irresponsible. However, the prospect of seeing one another again is starting to become as foreseeable as it is desirable – perhaps in July!

Each of you is invited to weigh in on these matters, if you haven't already. Our Vestry Members have been calling around in hopes that you will express your desires and concerns, hopes and fears, suggestions and critique on the subject of our common life. If you did not get a phone call, please make one – to the Rector – or write him a note or an email. Padre Sid will call or write back with a few points of inquiry for you to address!

Meanwhile, we remain gathered in spirit, singing in our places of shelter, staying informed and lifting our prayers and praises in the sure and certain hope that our life in and as the Body of Christ compels it. Please let Sid know if you have needs that are not being met, or if you would just like to talk: (203) 209-2339
sssymington@gmail.com

St. Benedict's, Los Osos:

8am on Zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7977776046>
10:30 www.facebook.com/stbenslososos/live

The National Cathedral, Washington, DC
<https://cathedral.org/online/>

All Saints Church, Pasadena
<https://allsaints-pas.org/live-stream/>

Church of the Incarnation, Dallas, Texas
<https://incarnation.org/digital-worship/>

Trinity Wall Street
<https://www.trinitywallstreet.org/blogs/watching-trinity-live-streamed-worship-services>