

Shared Worship Sunday

The pastors of:
St. Peter's Brodhagen,
St. Peter's Zurich
Trinity London,
Trinity Windsor

invite you to join us in worship

Some Sunday in July or August



Welcome

Welcome to worship for 15 August 2021. Thanks for tuning in. I'm Pastor Nadine Schroeder-Kranz.

You are in the right place! We are united in Christ in baptism and today we celebrate this in our congregational shared worship. Leadership is drawn from the Thames Ministry Area congregations of Trinity London, Trinity Windsor, St. Peter's Brodhagen, and St. Peter's Zurich, where I serve. Each has a part in the preparation and delivery of this service. Today the sermon is provided from the National Church continuing summer series. Today we give thanks to Rev. Jerry Borkowsky, Assistant to the Bishop, in the ELCIC Saskatchewan Synod for sharing his message.

Today, Trinity Windsor reads scripture;

The Choir of Trinity London provides the music for today's hymns;

St. Peter's Brodhagen provides Pastor Laura's excellent editing skills; and I lead worship on behalf of St. Peter's Zurich.

Greeting

We worship as we live on this the twelfth Sunday after Pentecost. Blessed be the holy Trinity, +one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever. Amen.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all! **And also with you!**

Prayer of the day:

Ever-loving God, your Son gives himself as living bread for the life of the world. Fill us with such a knowledge of his presence that we may be strengthened and sustained by his risen life to serve you continually, through Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord. **Amen**

Proverbs 9:1-6

Wisdom has built her house,

she has hewn her seven pillars.
She has slaughtered her animals, she has mixed her wine,
she has also set her table.
She has sent out her servant-girls, she calls
from the highest places in the town,
"You that are simple, turn in here!"
To those without sense she says,
"Come, eat of my bread
and drink of the wine I have mixed.
Lay aside immaturity, and live,
and walk in the way of insight."

Psalm 34:9-14

O fear the LORD, you his holy ones,
for those who fear him have no want.
¹⁰ The young lions suffer want and hunger,
but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing.
¹¹ Come, O children, listen to me;
I will teach you the fear of the LORD.
¹² Which of you desires life,
and covets many days to enjoy good?
¹³ Keep your tongue from evil,
and your lips from speaking deceit.
¹⁴ Depart from evil, and do good;
seek peace, and pursue it.

Ephesians 5:15-20

Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise, making the most of the time, because the days are evil. So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts, giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel Reading: John 6:51-58

I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."
The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" So Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day; for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever."

Homily

SUMMER

SERMON SERIES - 2021

August 15, 2021, Pentecost 12
John 6:51-58

Rev. Jerry Borkowsky

Assistant to the Bishop, Saskatchewan Synod

Grace and Peace be unto you from God our Creator and our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.

As I go through the process of sermon preparation, I always ask, so what does this text say, what am I hearing and what is the congregation hearing? These are all valid questions. I believe it is also important that we are mindful of what is going on around us and in the world.

Just think of some of the challenges that have been on our plates these past 16 months.

The pandemic and all that goes along with the virus. The anxiety and depression and the list goes on. It has not been an easy time.

Then the discovery of the remains of 215 children at the Kamloops Indian Residential School and then later the remains of over 700 unmarked graves on the Cowessess Reserve here in Saskatchewan.

Racism rampant all over our country and then the Killing of four members of a Muslim family by a person who hated Muslims.

And the list goes on.

So, when I'm reading a text, I am not looking for academic or theological controversies, rather I come to the text for council and comfort in dealing with life.

Two of my go-to resources in sermon preparation are Dr David Lose and Dr. Karoline Lewis. I very much appreciate their insights.

As David Lose says in his comments on this text: "I think I come to the text for meaning, not meaning in the sense of answering all my questions but meaning which makes life worth living."

I say amen to that!

Dr Karoline Lewis suggests that as we listen to this text, we are expecting another sermon on the eucharist. Rightly so - but our text takes us in a slightly different direction. So she says, "...but this is not your ordinary sacrament at the table."
How is it not "ordinary"?

Think about it this way: When we gather as the people of God for Holy Communion and as the pastor prepares us, we hear the words for the institution of the Lord's Supper.

These are the words we hear every time that Holy Communion is celebrated, and these words are central to the "Thanksgiving at the Table": "In the night in which he was betrayed our Lord

Jesus took the bread, gave thanks and broke it... then he took the cup..." "Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection and ascension..." I am sure you could fill in most of the blanks because they are so central to our faith.

What is noteworthy, is to remember that the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke all have these words as part of the institution of the Lord's Supper. In these three Gospels the institution of the Lord's Supper is linked — first to the Passover and secondly to Jesus' death.

Now, John does not include the words to the institution of the Lord's Supper as the other Gospels do. But John does have, Jesus feeding the 5000 as part of this chapter where we are told: "Then Jesus took the loaves and when he had given thanks, he distributed them..." (John 6:11 a).

If we can accept that the feeding of the 5000 and the bread of life discourse as we heard it read in our gospel, does this not look very much like John's version of the Last Supper?

This then allows us to "dislodge the sacrament from Jesus' death and locate it in the middle of Jesus' life", so suggests Dr. Lewis. And that gives us permission to ask, how does what John say make a difference in our understanding of Holy Communion?

What difference does it mean if we take seriously that Jesus says he is the Living Bread? "I am the Living Bread that came down from heaven..." 6;51 a., and then Jesus goes on to say in verse 52: "whoever eats of this bread will live forever."

What John has done, helps us to see, appreciate and understand that when we receive Holy Communion it is a celebration of the abundant life with God, NOW! RIGHT NOW! and it is not only a remembrance of Jesus' death.

I have discovered that attention to detail is a good practice when doing biblical work for sermon preparation.

Karoline Lewis puts it this way: "That...life according to John means that what you need for your life to be sustained, God provides: the abundant life."

In John 10:10 we read, "I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." John reminds us that eternal life is not something we postpone to our future, but it is our promise in the present, right now! That any claims about life with Jesus, life with God, means an abiding, it means a real relationship, here and now! Life is not a remembrance of Jesus' past life or a hope for a future but life lived in the moment as God's grace upon grace.

In John 1:16, we read "From his fullness we have all received grace upon grace." Recall that John's gospel begins with these words: "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God" and a few verses later (John 1:14a) John says, "and the Word became flesh and lived among us".

In Jesus, the Word was made flesh and the Word was given a physical form, and we meet the God who will be satisfied with nothing less than our whole lives. When Jesus speaks of giving us his flesh and blood, it is helpful to be reminded that "flesh and Blood "can also be

understood as a Hebrew idiom which refers to the whole person, hearts, minds, spirit, feeling, hopes, dreams—EVERYTHING!

David Lose puts it this way: "In Jesus, the whole of God meets us to love, redeem and sustain the whole of who we are, good, bad, and ugly."

Throughout John's Gospel we encounter many of the wonderful images that he uses to describe our relationship with God: Jesus is the shepherd; we are the sheep. He is the vine, and we are the branches. He abides in God, and we abide in him. The language John uses here in this text is pressed to its limits.

Jesus' life is so much a part of ours that there can be no separation, that when we receive Jesus, his life clings to our bones.

Martin Copenhaver puts it this way: "He can no more be taken from the believer's life than last Thursday's breakfast can be plucked from one's body."

This is God's promise made to us in the sacrament — to be one with us and for us forever, to stick with us, even in us no matter what.

Jesus is the living bread and when we celebrate Holy Communion, God comes to us to offer us promises that we can touch and feel and taste and eat.

Jesus is the Word that became flesh and lived among us so that we may have life and have it abundantly.

THANKS BE TO GOD
AMEN.

PEACE The peace of the Lord be with you always.

THE PRAYERS, 20210815

Rooted in Christ and sustained by the Spirit, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all of creation.

God of wisdom, enlighten your church. Guide theologians, biblical scholars, authors, and seminary professors as they seek greater knowledge and invite others into deeper understanding. Teach us to ask faithful questions and open our minds to new ideas. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of creation, mend the earth. Cool warming oceans and preserve melting ice caps. Increase our awareness of changing climate patterns and reveal new approaches to the ecological challenges we face. Shield those in the path of hurricanes or tropical storms. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of all nations, direct our leaders. Grant them courage to lay aside political grudges and renew their determination to address difficult conflicts. Guide them in the work of reconciliation. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of compassion, tend to the wounded. Rescue those tormented by mental illness or mired in addiction. Ease the anxiety of those struggling with dementia. Come quickly to help all who are grieving and all those who suffer.
God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of beauty, inspire artists. Bless those whose visual and musical gifts enliven this assembly. Bless the creative work of poets, hymn-writers, composers, painters, sculptors, and others that enrich our worship and daily life.
God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of resurrection, bring us to new life. Give us the living bread from heaven through which we abide in your love, and on the last day raise us with all the saints to eternal life.
God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We lift these and all our prayers to you, O God, confident in the promise of your saving love; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit we pray as Jesus taught us:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. **Amen**

Benediction

May the Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and with mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favour and give you peace. **Amen.**

Dismissal

***WORSHIP** is over,
now service begins.*

*Go on your way **REJOICING**,
enabled by the **HOLY SPIRIT**
to love and serve the **RISEN LORD.***

Thanks be to God!

