



St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church
 Wilton, WI
 Second Sunday after Pentecost
 June 14, 2020
**Inviting People to Journey with Christ's
 Family in Spreading God's Love and Mercy**

Moses tells the Israelites that they are called to be a priestly kingdom and a holy people. Jesus sends out the disciples as laborers into the harvest. In baptism we too are anointed for ministry, sharing God's compassion with our needy world. From the Lord's table we go forth to proclaim the good news, to heal the sick, and to share our bread with the hungry.

Gathering
*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God**

Gather Us In



1 Here in this place the new light is stream-ing, now is the dark - ness
 2 We are the young, our lives are a mys - t'ry, we are the old who
 3 Here we will take the wine and the wa - ter, here we will take the
 4 Not in the dark of build-ings con - fin - ing, not in some heav - en,



van - ished a - way; see in this space our fears and our dream-ings
 yearn for your face; we have been sung through - out all of his - t'ry,
 bread of new birth, here you shall call your sons and your daugh - ters,
 light years a - way— here in this place the new light is shin - ing,



brought here to you in the light of this day.
 called to be light to the whole hu - man race.
 call us a - new to be salt for the earth.
 now is the king - dom, and now is the day.



Gath - er us in, the lost and for - sak - en, gath - er us in, the
 Gath - er us in, the rich and the haugh - ty, gath - er us in, the
 Give us to drink the wine of com - pas - sion, give us to eat the
 Gath - er us in and hold us for - ev - er, gath - er us in and



blind and the lame; call to us now, and we shall a - wak - en,
 proud and the strong; give us a heart, so meek and so low - ly,
 bread that is you; nour - ish us well, and teach us to fash - ion
 make us your own; gath - er us in, all peo - ples to - geth - er,



we shall a - rise at the sound of our name.
 give us the cour - age to en - ter the song.
 lives that are ho - ly and hearts that are true.
 fire . . . of love in our flesh and our bone.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

God of compassion, you have opened the way for us and brought us to yourself. Pour your love into our hearts, that, overflowing with joy, we may freely share the blessings of your realm and faithfully proclaim the good news of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

Word

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.**

FIRST READING

At Sinai God assured Israel, "You shall be my treasured possession," and commissioned them to serve as mediating priests for the nations. The people commit themselves completely to God's will.

Exodus 19:2-8a

²[The Israelites] had journeyed from Rephidim, entered the wilderness of Sinai, and camped in the wilderness; Israel camped there in front of the mountain.³Then Moses went up to God; the LORD called to him from the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the Israelites: ⁴You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. ⁵Now therefore, 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, ⁶but you shall be for me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the Israelites."

⁷So Moses came, summoned the elders of the people, and set before them all these words that the LORD had commanded him. ^{8a}The people all answered as one: "Everything that the LORD has spoken we will do."

The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Psalm 100

¹Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all you lands!

²Serve the LORD with gladness; come into God's presence with a song.

³**Know that the LORD is God, our maker to whom we belong;
we are God's people and the sheep of God's pasture.**

⁴Enter the gates of the LORD with thanksgiving and the courts with praise;
give thanks and bless God's holy name.

⁵**Good indeed is the LORD, whose steadfast love is everlasting,
whose faithfulness endures from age to age**

SECOND READING

We are no longer God's enemies but have peace with God because we were brought into a right relationship with God through Christ's death.

Romans 5:1-8

¹Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ²through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. ³And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

⁶For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. ⁸But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us

The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

The mission of Jesus' followers is to continue the mission of Jesus himself. Here, he instructs his first disciples as to how they might proclaim the gospel through their words and deeds.

The gospel according to Matthew 9:35-10:8 [9-23]

Glory to you, O Lord.

³⁵Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and curing every disease and every sickness. ³⁶When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; ³⁸therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."

^{10:1}Then Jesus summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness. ²These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon, also known as Peter, and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his

brother John; ³Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; ⁴Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed him.

⁵These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, ⁶but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. ⁷As you go, proclaim the good news, 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.' ⁸Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. You received without payment; give without payment.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ.

Sermon

This week, I received an email message from the La Crosse Area Synod. It was a reminder of a resolution adopted during the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to designate June 17th as a day of commemoration. It will be a day to commemorate the martyrdom of those now known as the Emanuel 9.

Who were the Emanuel 9? Perhaps you recall that on June 17, 2015, a man entered Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina. He asked if he could participate in the Bible study that was taking place. They welcomed this stranger. Yet, he was a self-professed white supremacist. He shot and killed all nine of them.

It is so hard for us to think of this scene, because it shakes us to our collective cores. How could this happen to God-loving, faithful persons who were pillars in their communities? They were in a church at a Bible study. We ask God, how could this happen?

It happened, in part, because of fear. Fear on the part of the shooter, of people different than himself. Fear that encouraged his hatred for African-American people. Fear expressed in his need for power. Fear that bolstered his feelings of privilege as a white person. Fear that was expressed through his uncontrolled anger for all black people, even those he had just met. Fear that allowed him to unleash the bullets that killed nine persons; nine persons created by God.

The Rev. Joseph Darby, a prominent pastor, in an MSNBC report from the time, made reference to the shooter's thoughts and actions. He stated, "This is the product of what happens when those who spout divisive and bigoted rhetoric speak to people who do not respond to words with thought but to words with action. This is the epitome of a hate crime..."

Fear of people different than himself unleashed the shooter's hatred. A different kind of fear gripped the innocent attendees. Two very different types of fear.

President Barack Obama was quoted at the time in a National Public Radio (NPR) report that I have paraphrased as follows, "[I]t's a tragedy anytime Americans die in a situation like this, but it's especially heartbreaking when it happens "at a place where people are seeking peace." "...[T]his church has been a headquarters for civil rights activities for decades." "It's a place where civil rights leaders spoke and led marches

in search for freedom."

Former President Obama also quoted a eulogy that Martin Luther King, Jr., delivered at the funeral service for three of the four children who were killed in the 1963 bombing of a Baptist church in Birmingham. [Paraphrased] In death, King said, those three little girls told America "that we must be concerned not merely about who murdered them, but about the system, the way of life, the philosophy which produced the murderers."

We ask...how does this happen? It is, in part, "the system, the way of life, the philosophy" of some in our society that promotes hatred. It is people searching for examples of injustice, prejudice and inequality that support one's racism. It is listening and accepting the rhetoric of persons who place blame on people of color, rather than to acknowledge their own shortcomings and sinfulness. It is the fear of participating in peaceful discussions that challenge one's prejudices. It is people who choose not to live by God's commandments. It is people who use the Bible to support their racist, prejudiced views. It is all of the above and perhaps more.

The ELCA adopted June 17th as a day of commemoration for the martyrdom of the Emanuel 9, in part, because the shooter had been raised in an ELCA congregation. He was not a person who had no knowledge of God. He was not a person who had never heard God's word. He knew of God's teachings, yet instead of hearing God's word that evening, instead of being a disciple, he chose to kill nine Christians because of their color.

Our gospel passage for today, speaks of Jesus' commissioning the disciples. It begins with a reference to Jesus' compassion for others, his teaching and his modeling. It speaks of Jesus' concern for the helpless, the harassed, and those needing a shepherd. Verse 9:39 states, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few, therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."

As Christian believers, we are called to model Jesus' teachings and to follow his example. This requires our being open to hearing what God is directing us to do. This requires our moving away from our own limited thinking to those things that God desires. This requires effort, not complacency. This requires some risk taking, if one is to challenge persons who believe that being white places them above those of any other race.

Throughout the gospels, we vicariously experience what it means to be a disciple of Jesus. We "experience" multiple examples of Jesus' compassion for all people. We realize that Jesus did not discriminate against other people. He cared for human beings, even when their human failings and sinfulness were evident. He offered them a better way to live.

Yes, we are all sinful people who fall short of Jesus' teaching and modeling. We fall short in expressing a loving concern for God and our neighbors. We fall short in myriad ways. But, deep down we know what God desires for us: to hear God's word, to model Jesus' teachings, and to do God's will. We read and listen to God's word through "scripture, preaching and song," so the Holy Spirit can work within us. If we harden our hearts to hearing what God has to say, we fail to be the people God has called us to be. To do God's will is not to go our own way, but to go God's way.

You have heard me preach on several occasions about the importance of placing scripture passages in

context. Taking scripture out of context runs the risk of people using the passages for their own purposes. By placing what we read in the Bible in its historical context, we realize that the Bible contains examples of racism, prejudice, corruption, inappropriate use of power, exclusion, injustices and more. These things led to God's anger and wrath. They resulted in God sending Jesus to earth, to be a teacher and model. Therefore, we need to understand the Bible in light of Jesus' teaching, Jesus' modeling and Jesus' message regarding "the good news of the kingdom." (vs. 9:35)

In the ELCA, we believe that the Bible is the inspired word of God. That is where reading the Bible in context, in light of its historical setting, is so important. The Bible does not directly address every issue that we face in the world today. But if we listen to scripture as the inspired word of God, if we do not seek our own understandings but rely on the Holy Spirit to work in us, we hear Jesus' teaching and see Jesus' modeling for our present day and age. God's word does speak to us in our present context, if we open our ears and our hearts to hear God's message.

Jesus, in our gospel passage for today, gave his disciples "authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness." (vs. 10:1) Then, as now, Jesus calls us to have compassion for others, especially those who are harassed and helpless. Jesus calls us to make disciples of all nations so they have a shepherd; Jesus, the Good Shepherd. Jesus calls us to act against every disease and every sickness, including the disease of racism.

As we reflect on what is happening in our world today and in the protests against racial injustice, where are we? Have we looked deeply at ourselves and our own lives? Are we promoting racial injustice, white privilege, unwarranted power and authority through our actions? When we hear of those who have been treated unjustly and unfairly, do we look at them with compassion? Do we see the actions of the police officer in Minneapolis against George Floyd as harassment and hatred? Do we recognize the actions of the man who killed the Emanuel 9 as completely contrary to Jesus' teaching, Jesus' modeling, and what we are called to believe as members of the ELCA?

We need a shepherd who leads the way toward greater love, not hate. Jesus is the Good Shepherd. We need laborers who are not afraid to do what Jesus is calling them to do. Jesus' teaching and modeling shows us the way. We need laborers who are moving beyond complacency. Jesus directed the disciples, and us, to be those people. Jesus directs us to be his people who labor in God's name, demonstrating compassion for those who are helpless, harassed, and in need of a shepherd.

Let us listen for God's word and truly hear the good news of the gospel: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven and made new. Jesus died on the cross to atone for the sins of all humanity. Through his death, those who believe in Jesus receive the free gift of salvation and new life in him. We are called to share this good news with others. We are called to do God's work in the world. The harvest is plentiful. May our labors be labors of love for God and one another. Amen.

Hymn

Will You Come and Follow Me

The Summons



1 "Will you come and fol - low me if I but call
2 "Will you leave your - self be - hind if I but call
3 "Will you let the blind - ed see if I but call
4 "Will you love the you you hide if I but call
5 Lord, your sum - mons ech - oes true when you but call



your name? Will you go where you don't
your name? Will you care for cruel and
your name? Will you set the pris - 'ners
your name? Will you quell the fear in -
my name. Let me turn and fol - low



know and nev - er be the same?
kind and nev - er be the same?
free and nev - er be the same?
side and nev - er be the same?
you and nev - er be the same.



Will you let my love be shown, will you let my
Will you risk the hos - tile stare, should your life at -
Will you kiss the lep - er clean, and do such as
Will you use the faith you've found to re - shape the
In your com - pa - ny I'll go where your love and



name be known, will you let my life be
tract or scare? Will you let me an - swer
this un - seen, and ad - mit to what I
world a - round, through my sight and touch and
foot - steps show. Thus I'll move and live and



grown in you and you in me?"
pray'r in you and you in me?"
mean in you and you in me?"
sound in you and you in me?"
grow in you and you in me.

Text: John L. Bell, b. 1949
Music: KELVINGROVE, Scottish traditional
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PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Called into unity with one another and the whole creation, let us pray for our shared world.

Holy One, you bring us together and call us your own. Bless theologians, teachers, and preachers who help us grow in faith. Guide your church, that we might be a holy people. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Holy One, the whole earth is yours. Where there is fire, bring cool air and new growth. Where there is flooding, bring abatement. Where there is drought, bring rain. Inspire us to care for what you have provided. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Holy One, we have created divisions with others in your world. In places of conflict war-torn countries, raise up leaders who work to develop lasting peace and reconciliation. Encourage organizations and individuals who care for all forced to leave their homes. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Holy One, you care for those who are harassed and helpless. We especially remember George Floyd and others who have experienced racial injustice. Protect and defend those who are abused. Heal those who are sick. Feed all who hunger. Empower all whose voices go unheard, and help us respond to the needs of our neighbors. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Holy One, you provide a plentiful harvest of gifts and resources. Prepare us to labor and gather the fruits of this congregation, that we might discover new ways of living. Minister to us in our work, that we do not lose heart. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Holy One, you bring all people to yourself. We give thanks for the holy people who have gone before us. Sustain us in your mission until the day you bear us up to join the saints in light. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Receive these prayers, O God, and those too deep for words; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

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.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

Rise Up, O Saints of God!



- 1 Rise up, O saints of God! From vain am - bi - tions turn;
- 2 Speak out, O saints of God! De - spair en - gulfs earth's frame;
- 3 Rise up, O saints of God! The king - dom's task em - brace;
- 4 Give heed, O saints of God! Cre - a - tion cries in pain;
- 5 Com - mit your hearts to seek the paths which Christ has trod;



Christ rose tri - um - phant that your hearts with no - bler zeal might burn.
as heirs of God's bap - tis - mal grace, the word of hope pro - claim.
re - dress sin's cru - el con - se - quence; give jus - tice larg - er place.
stretch forth your hand of heal - ing now, with love the weak sus - tain.
and, quick - ened by the Spir - it's pow'r, rise up, O saints of God!

Text: Norman O. Forness, b. 1936

Music: FESTAL SONG, William H. Walter, 1825-1893

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Go in peace. Christ is with you.
Thanks be to God.

We extend our sympathy to Gloria Meltesen and family on the death of her brother, Darold Lietz, of Florence, Colorado.

IN OUR PRAYERS

Katie Wallace, Bill Collar, Dakota Holiday, Carla Von Haden, Ruth Johnson, Judy Bever, Alrita Ornes, Dick Krause, Donna Welch, Brad Bever, Fred Baldwin

IN THE MILITARY

Jacob Picha, Todd Nofsinger, Dylan Dougherty, Danelle Dougherty, Seth Tormoen, Robert Cale.

The Emanuel Nine

Rev. Clementa C. Pinckney*
Cynthia Marie Graham Hurd
Susie Jackson
Ethel Lee Lance
Depayne Middleton-Doctor
Tywanza Sanders
Rev. Daniel L. Simmons*
Sharonda Coleman-Singleton
Myra Thompson

* Both were graduates of the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary

June 17th Commemoration Message

An ELCA Prayer Service for Commemoration of the Emanuel Nine will be available for online viewing at 11:00 a.m on June 17th...The service will include leaders from around the ELCA and ecumenical partners, as well as a sermon by Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton. We join in a time of repentance, mourning, and prayer as we remember these nine martyrs and renounce the sins of racism and white supremacy. The service can be viewed at ELCA.org/EmanuelNine.

CONTACTS DURING CORONAVIRUS CLOSURE

In case of emergency, contact Pastor Cathleen, via text, 608-865-1074, Justin Arndt (608-435-6336) (414-587-6642) or Nalani Bever (608-387-2311).

To activate the prayer chain, please contact Nalani or Louise Buchholz (608-435-6435).

Additional Contact Information:

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