

Sixth Sunday of Easter

May 17, 2020

THEME FOR THE DAY The love of God who lives in us leads to a life of obedience. Jesus' promise of another Counselor is a loaded one: the Holy Spirit gives us the ability to do what Jesus asks. This Sunday's lessons teach that love for our Risen Lord means obedience to his commands. Only Jesus' promises make that possible. The Prayer of the Day sets the tone: "Put your Spirit in us to think those things that are true and long for those things that are good..."

Our Worship Service

HYMNS YOU MAY WISH TO SING 143 "He's Risen, He's Risen"

476 "Thee Will I Love, My Strength, My Tower" 332 "Go, My Children, With My Blessing"

PRAYER OF THE DAY Father of lights, every good and perfect gift comes from you. Inspire us to think those things that are true and long for those things that are good, that we may always make our petitions according to your gracious will; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

FIRST LESSON: Acts 17:22-31 Could this lesson be more timely? Paul preached to a people enamored with spirituality, but ignorant of the true God. To a people who thought they had all the answers, Paul offers real knowledge of the true God unknown to them. Imagine the scene on Mars Hill. Rising above them, the higher hill of the Acropolis loomed and upon its peak the Parthenon dominated the skyline. This timeless treasure of architecture marked the high point of Greek art and culture, and served as a temple for the city's patron goddess, Athena. In front of this jaw-dropping beauty, Paul says, "God does not live in temples built by hands." No, this unknown God made himself known by living with us, and then living in us. Love for this risen Lord leads to a life filled with loving obedience.

PSALM OF THE DAY:

Psalm 66 CW 90 (Or Read in your Bible)

SECOND LESSON: 1 Peter 3:15-22 Last week Peter declared what we are in Christ: a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a people belonging to God. In this lesson he details what that means for our lives: Set apart Christ as Lord. Love for our Lord means obedience to his commands—even if that obedience means suffering. The Christian can offer willing obedience in the face of suffering because Christ rules, and Holy Baptism guarantees our connection to him.

VERSE OF THE DAY: Alleluia. Alleluia. Christ is Risen! He is Risen indeed! Alleluia. If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. Alleluia.

THE GOSPEL: John 14:15-21 Because I live, you, too, will live! Jesus promises more than just a resurrection from the dead for his disciples. Jesus is life, that state of blessed holiness and perfect righteousness and communion with God. Man had lost that life in Adam's fall, and sin and death rushed into the vacuum left behind. The Son of God, the Life, came to bring it back. Because he is alive, we, too, will live in blessedness and holiness forever. We are children who will never be orphaned, but rather will be comforted, counseled, and kept forever. What is our response? Life lived as God intended—a life that treasures our Lord, his Word, and obedience to both!

CONFESSION OF FAITH

Apostles' Creed, CW Page 19

SERMON John 14:15-21 "YOU ARE NOT ORPHANS!"

The Lord's Prayer

CW Page 20

Benediction

The Lord Bless You and Keep You.

The Lord Make His Face Shine on You and be Gracious to You.

The Lord Look on You with Favor and Give You Peace.

First Lesson – Acts 17:22-31

22Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: "Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. 23For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. 24"The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands. 25And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else. 26From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. 27God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. 28'For in him we live and move and have our being.' As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.' 29"Therefore since we are God's offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone--an image made by man's design and skill. 30In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. 31For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead."

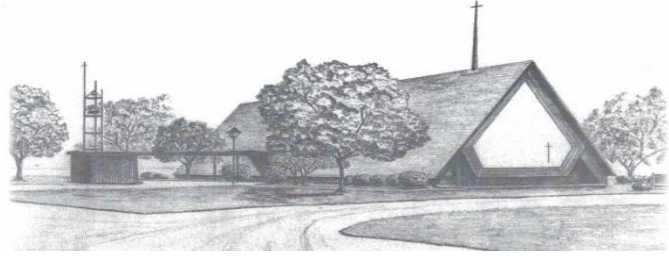
Second Lesson – 1 Peter 3:15-22

15But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, 16keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. 17It is better, if it is God's will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. 18For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit, 19through whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison 20who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, 21and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also--not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 22who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand--with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

Gospel Lesson - John 14:15-21

15"If you love me, you will obey what I command. 16And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever-- 17the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. 18I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. 19Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. 20On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. 21Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him."

*St. Peter Evangelical
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1708 West 6th Avenue
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Sunday, May 17, 2020

Welcome to Our Worship – While we wait for clarification on worship size restrictions in Green County, pastor will continue to be at the church from 10:00 AM until noon on Sundays. An abbreviated service (about every 30 minutes) with a devotion and communion for those desiring it will be offered (maximum of nine (9)) at this time. Bulletins, printed sermons, and Holy Communion will be available at that time. May the message of our Lord's resurrection and his victory over sin and death give you confidence in this challenging time!

Worship Opportunities - The following WELS area churches will have Sunday sermons and services available online. **If you have internet connections you can access their web sites** - services will be prerecorded so that you can access them at any time.

Risen Savior, McFarland

www.risensaviorlutheran.org

Resurrection, Verona/Monroe

www.rlcverona.org

St Matthews, Janesville

www.stmatthewsjanesville.org

If you do not have an internet connection or are unable to view these services – Pastor Hellwig will bring his hot spot and laptop computer on Sundays *so those who want to view one of these services may do so*. We plan to connect the computer to the church's television screen. (It is unclear but we think we are still limited to 9 people in a room.) *Because of this limitation, please let pastor know when you plan to view in advance.*

Holy Communion - Pastor Hellwig will continue to be available to offer private spiritual counsel and private communion upon request - either at church or at members' homes. Please call in advance.

Large Print Bulletin Large print copies of the bulletin/ sermons are available upon request.

Offerings

Offerings (General Fund) - 5/10/20 = \$915 5/3/20 = \$570 (also, \$10 for Wise Institutional Ministries)

Prayer Requests Please remember all our sick and shut-ins in your prayers:

Phone calls also are nice!

Sunday School and Catechism Instruction – At the present time, both are being offered remotely.

Hardship - **If you are experiencing any unusual hardship related to Covid 19** (or other situation), please don't hesitate to let Pastor Hellwig or any church council member know. (We can't help if we don't know.)

Mailings – All shut-ins and those with limitations on getting around, are now receiving weekly bulletins and sermons mailed to their homes. Anyone may request the same.

Communication as much as possible by e-mail and internet. At present, we are sending to 41 member e-mails covering 50 to 60 souls. *If you have a working e-mail address but have not shared it with St. Peter, please do so – so that we can better reach you!* **If you have internet and do not need our regular printed newsletter mailings, let us know so we can remove you from our mailing list.**

Bible Reading/Study Series – The series on Proverbs is concluding. You will soon be receiving an introduction to the Book of Psalms. Psalms are really songs that were originally used in the worship of God’s Old Testament people, Israel. About half were written by King David, the sweet writer of songs. They cover a wide range of areas but especially focus on the coming Savior. They are quoted about 80 times in the New Testament. Luther said that if he had to be left with one book of the Bible, he would choose the Psalms.

Pastor Vacancy- we have requested a new seminary graduate. **Assignment day is scheduled for THIS WEEK May 21st** and we will find out at that time if a graduate has been assigned to St. Peter. Please, keep this call and St. Peter’s ministry in your prayers.

Vacation Bible School – Due to health concerns and possible restrictions, the church council has canceled the regularly scheduled VBS originally set for early July (with the help from Camp Phillip personnel).

LEGAL WORSHIP SIZE LIMITATIONS - There is a lack of clarity with regard to limits on worship sizes at the present time. The recent Wisconsin State Supreme Court decision determined that the state did not have the authority to continue the restrictions in place without input from the Legislature. A number of counties have issued their own continuance of the ban including Dane (with a 25% of building capacity limit for churches), Rock, and Green counties. The Wisconsin Counties Association has advised their members that the counties may not have authority to continue the ban given the Supreme Court decision. A number of counties have since withdrawn their continuation of the state imposed restrictions and made the restriction only advisory. It is unclear where Green County now stands. We have requested a clarification and have had no response yet. It is our hope the **present maximum of 9 to a room in churches would be replaced with the 25% rule which would allow for slightly large gatherings with social distancing and masks.** This would allow safety restrictions in churches to mirror those required in businesses, e.g., Kwik Trip stores, etc.

Serving You

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Vacancy Pastor