

THE PARISH CONNECTION

June/July 2020

A Community of Faith, Inspired by Christ, Gathered to Grow, Empowered to Serve.



June Lectionary Readings

June 7, 2020

Trinity Sunday

Genesis 1:1-2:4a and Psalm 8

2 Corinthians 13:11-13 - Matthew 28:16-20

June 14, 2020

2nd Sunday after Pentecost

Genesis 18:1-15, (21:1-7) and Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19

Romans 5:1-8 - Matthew 9:35-10:8, (9-23)

June 21, 2020

3rd Sunday after Pentecost

Genesis 21:8-21 and Psalm 86:1-10, 16-17

Romans 6:1b-11 - Matthew 10:24-39

June 28, 2020

4th Sunday after Pentecost

Genesis 22:1-14 and Psalm 13

Romans 6:12-23 - Matthew 10:40-42

Return to Church

We have not yet returned to full time church. We hope to do this shortly. The Conference has suggested June 21 as the earliest date. We will be looking at what this means and what we need to do for this to happen. We will let you know our progress. God bless all of you.

HAPPY
SUMMER

Prayer and Concerns

Joys: warm weather, greening of the world, farmers in the fields, summer vacations

Concerns— Steve Keller, Chuck Kuhl, servicepersons & their families, all clergy & churches in transition, graduates, students, summer travel,

Remembering—

June Birthdays

Ronnie Kirk	6/1
Laurie Moore	6/2
Lucas Olson	6/3
Greg Wilson	6/4
Duana Bremer	6/6
Andy Blomberg, Jr.	6/7
Maya Petersen	6/9
Wyatt Reindahl	6/11
Bobbi Wilson	6/11
Eric Frank	6/12
Arlene Althoff	6/16
Mandy Sharpe	6/18
Brynn LaBlanc	6/20
Debbie Frank	6/21
Amber Anderson	6/23
Brenda Olson	6/25
Zachary Iverson	6/27
Roger La Blanc	6/30

July Birthdays

Todd Petersen	7/1
Makenna Phernetton	7/3
David Avery	7/5
Jordan Blanchard	7/8
Robert Zimmer	7/12
Dawn Cress	7/15
Tyson Blanchard	7/18
Steve Keller	7/18
Nicole Pietz	7/20
Becky Reindahl	7/20
Rachel Zimmer	7/20
Mary Stuntz	7/21
Terri Wilson	7/21
David Reindahl	7/23
Mark Thompson	7/25
Andy Blomberg	7/28



June Anniversaries

Dave & Becky Reindahl	6/6
Allen & Ardys Warner	6/12
Robert & Rachel Zimmer	6/12
Alan & Amanda Linehan	6/19
George & Nancy Stutter	6/25

July Anniversaries

Alpha & Heather Greene	7/9
Ben & Alison Avery	7/11
Arlyn & Denise Severson	7/14
Gary & Debbie Stevens	7/14
Matt & Christine Beebe	7/29

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY 'Relay for Life'--August 1, 2020

Our family & friends will be participating in the American Cancer Society "virtual" "Relay for Life" in 'Memory' and 'Honor' of family members as well as many others who have been touched by cancer. Anyone wishing to donate or participate is welcome to do so.

I have appreciated your generosity in the past and know that together, 'we can make a difference' in striving to find a cure for Cancer.

Sincere thanks for your support.

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From Bishop Jung”

“After a long time, the king of Egypt died. The Israelites groaned under their slavery and cried out. Out of the slavery their cry for help rose up to God.” (Exodus 2:23)

In a very real sense, slavery is an apt metaphor for the current coronavirus. We are suffering under the tyranny of a power beyond our control. The relentless emotional and physical restrictions are oppressive. Exerting personal will and direction endangers both ourselves and others. Escape comes at incredible risk. And we are all in this together; no distinctions between rich or poor, educated or uneducated, young or old, religious or irreligious, exist. Certainly, many in our culture are more at risk than others, but for the first time in recent memory, our entire planet is facing the same challenge and threat at the same time.

There has perhaps never been a time on our Western culture when the Hebrew scriptures have had more relevancy to our day-to-day living. The majority of the citizenry of the United States have not lived in constant concern for food, clothing, shelter, healthcare, employment, education, and survival. Our mainline churches are predominantly middle class, and it is difficult to relate to much of the story of our Jewish forebears. Yet, the story of the children of God—the children of Israel—is quickly becoming our story.

For much of the first four millennia of Jewish history, God’s people lived in captivity or exile. Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Greece, Rome took turns conquering and ruling the Chosen people. During these times, and most of the intervals in between, the children of God lived short lives of struggle in poverty, illness, desperation, and danger. A reading through the Torah, the Psalms, and the Prophets gives a stark lesson in the suffering of the Hebrew people. Yet, through it all the people lived in covenantal hope of God’s redeeming power.

For Christians today, we empathize with the Israelites and understand that we have much more in common than at any other time in memory. We are a suffering people, acknowledging our own limitations and powerlessness, and coming to a heightened awareness of inequalities and the need for

cooperation and commitment to the common good. This is unfamiliar and uncomfortable territory for many of us.

Predominantly, we look to science and government to solve the current crisis and return us to “normal.” We want the problem to go away, and we do not want to face the possibility that we have encountered something that science, money, and political power may be inadequate to deal with it. Our Hebrew testament reminds us that this is the situation humankind has found itself in time after time throughout most of history. And when human solutions fail, people of faith turn to God.

Our Jewish and Christian history has great grace to offer us in this time of global pandemic. First, we know that our growth and faithfulness come to us through sacrifice. To get to a Promised Land, we must travel through wilderness; to get to Easter, there is always a Good Friday. But in the vastness of wilderness we know there is a Promised Land. In the darkness of Good Friday, we know that Easter is coming. Our faith affirms for us that no matter how bad things seem, God’s grace and blessing awaits us on the other side.

Second, both Judaism and Christianity are corporate faiths, the good of the whole people is more important than the good of any individual. Individual rights, entitlements, and personal preference are hallmarks of the thinking of many privileged people in the United States. However, our foundational identity as a nation committed to the common good is often lost to individual demands. Yet, true freedom is not a competition between who gets what, but how we all rise or fall together. We are God’s, God’s children, together. What is best for the least of us is best for all of us. The more time and energy we give to caring for others allows us less time to worry about whether we are getting what we want individually.

Third, we are a people of transformation. When we emerge from this pandemic, we will not be returning to “normal,” but to the new reality that will define a very different future. “I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.” (Isaiah 43:19) If we trust in God’s redemptive power, restorative vision, and consistent promise, then

we know that where we are heading is a place we've never been before. We have seen ways that our world was prepared for this current crisis, but also the many painful ways we were completely unprepared. By God's grace, we will have learned much and we will make sweeping changes as we move forward.

It is not always easy to see the silver lining to the oppressive clouds that cover us. We bristle and resist the current limitations on our lives. But I ask us all, as modern-day Israelites, to turn to God in prayer, and to trust that God will do "a new thing." These days are difficult, but our God is good. Live your faith. Witness to your faith as God reveals the new reality that is to come.

Grace and peace,
Bishop Hee-Soo Jung



Ruby's Pantry food distribution will take place on June 13th and July 11th at the alternate location where cars will be staged on the Amery school district campus prior to coming over to drive through and pick up their bundles at AmTec. The front of the line will be by the school bus garage and our local police chief will be monitoring traffic for us. There is no pre-registration and no time slots; you will just need to wait in line. Distributions will begin at 9; it is suggested to arrive early. For more information, email at office.ameryucc@gmail.com; or call 715-268-7390.

You will receive an abundance of grocery items. This is a drive-thru distribution so we ask that guests come with a clean trunk and have their \$20 donation ready. Our volunteers will be wearing face masks, gloves, and eye protection.

Deadline for the August
Newsletter is July 23rd



A Summer Blessing

May you walk with God
This summer
In whatever you do
Wherever you go

Walking with God means...
Walking with honesty
And with courage,
Walking with love
And respect
And concern for the feelings of others

May you talk to God
This summer
And every day and
In every situation

Talking with God means...
Praying words of praise
For the beauty of creation
Saying prayers of thanks
For friends and good times,
Asking God's help
In all your decisions
Expressing sorrow
When you have failed

May you talk with God
Every day. Amen.

– Author unknown



“God so loved the world that he gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.” John 3:16

It is true that God loves us. God loves us so much that he gave Jesus to us, that he died on the cross for our sins to be forgiven. However, there are times when we wonder. There are times when it doesn't seem so. This pandemic could be one of those times. If God loves us so much, then why are so many people dying? Why is the economy in so much trouble? Why are so many people suffering?

God never said there wouldn't be suffering in the world. In fact, Jesus warns His disciples that they would suffer in His name. Jesus warns them that the road of discipleship would be rough. We know that bad things happen to good people. This imperfect and broken world brings the suffering with it. Since we know this, we can combat the suffering with God's love. We can use that love to try and make this world a better place. We do not try to make it a perfect place—just a better place.

As we continue through this pandemic, let us do our best to use God's love to make a better world. Let us continue to stay connected with each other to the best of our abilities. When we know of a birthday, send a card or make a telephone call. The telephone can be a true connection between us and a suffering person.

I pray that all of you have a wonderful summer. I pray that God guide you in all that you do. I pray that you walk with Jesus at your sides and in your hearts. May God bless you mightily this summer, and through you, others.

In Jesus' name,

Pastor John

July Lectionary Readings

July 5, 2020

5th Sunday after Pentecost

Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67

Psalm 45:10-17

Romans 7:15-25a - Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

July 12, 2020

6th Sunday after Pentecost

Genesis 25:19-34 and Psalm 119:105-112

Romans 8:1-11 - Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

July 19, 2020

7th Sunday after Pentecost

Genesis 28:10-19a and Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24

Romans 8:12-25 - Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

July 26, 2020

8th Sunday after Pentecost

Genesis 29:15-28 and Psalm 105:1-11

Romans 8:26-39 - Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52



THE WILLOW RIVER PARISH

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The Willow River Parish of United Methodist Churches

John Hazen, Pastor

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Sunday Worship

8:30 a.m. – Clear Lake 9:45 a.m. – Faith Family
11:00 a.m. – Deer Park

Church School @ Clear Lake and Faith Family
Sundays after Young People's Time