



Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church

1187 C.R. 128 & U.S. Rt. 20

Fremont, Ohio 43420

Pastor Tim Miller

93.1FM

Church: 419-332-6820

faithchurch@amplex.net

www.faithfremont.org

Seventh Sunday of Easter

May 12, 2024

Setting 3 with Holy Communion

*Congregation please stand as you are able.

Introduction

The gospel for Easter's seventh Sunday is always taken from the long prayer Jesus prays for his followers in John's gospel on the night before his death, and always includes Jesus' desire that his followers will be one as he and the Father are one. This oneness is not mere doctrinal agreement or institutional unity, but mutual abiding, interpenetrating life, mutual love, and joy. This oneness is the work of the Spirit whom we have received but also await. Come, Holy Spirit!

(8:00) Prelude - Praise Choir: *Shake Another Hand*

(10:30) Prelude: *Happy the Soul Who Dwells on God* **R. Blake**

(10:30) Bell Choir: *Come, People of the Risen King* arr. L. Larson

Welcome & Announcements: Joys and Concerns

Signing of the Pew Register by all present.

***(8:00) Gathering Song:** *I Will Call Upon the Lord* **M. O'Shields**

I will call upon the Lord who is worthy to be praised.

So shall I be saved by my enemies. I will call upon the Lord.

Chorus: The Lord liveth and blessed be the rock, and

And let the God of my salvation be exalted.

The Lord liveth and blessed be the rock, and

And let the God of my salvation be exalted.

Blessed be the Lord on high. Blessed be his son the Christ.

We shall praise our God for eternity. We will call upon the Lord. *Chorus*

***(10:30) Gathering Song:** *Alleluia! Sing to Jesus* **ELW 392**

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

*Greeting

P: Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

C: And also with you.

*Invitation to Worship

P: This is the day that the Lord has made

C: Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

P: We have come together in the name of Christ to offer our praise and thanksgiving, to hear and receive God's holy word, to pray for the needs of the world, and to seek the forgiveness of our sins, that by the power of the Holy Spirit we may give ourselves to the service of God.

C: Amen.

P: Blessed is the Lord

C: for he has heard the voice of our prayer.

P: Therefore, our hearts dance for joy

C: and in our song will we praise our God.

P: Blessed are you, Lord our God, creator and redeemer of all;
To you be glory and praise forever. From the waters of chaos, you drew forth the world and in your great love fashioned us in your image. Now, through the deep waters of death, you have brought your people to new birth by raising your Son to life in triumph. May Christ your light ever dawn in our hearts as we offer you our sacrifice of thanks and praise. Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

C: Blessed be God forever.

P: As we rejoice in the gift of this new day, so may the light of your presence, O God, Set our hearts on fire with love for you; now and forever.

C: Amen.

(Above liturgy from "Unfolding The Living Work" by Jim Cotter)

Thanksgiving for Baptism

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
the wellspring of grace,
our Easter and our joy.

C: Amen.

P: Look, here is water!

C: Here is our water of life! Alleluia!

P: Immersed in the promises of baptism,
let us give thanks for what God has done for us.
We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning
your voice thundered over the deep
and water became the essence of life.
Adam and Eve beheld Eden's verdant rivers.
The ark carried your creation through the flood into a new day.
Miriam led the dancing as your people passed through the sea
into freedom's land.
In a desert pool the Ethiopian official
entered your boundless baptismal life.
Look, here is water!

C: Here is our water of life! Alleluia!

P: At the river your beloved Son was baptized by John
and anointed with the Holy Spirit.
By the baptism of Jesus' death and resurrection
you opened the floodgates of your reconciling love,
freeing us to live as Easter people.
We rejoice with glad hearts,
giving all honor and praise to you,
through the risen Christ, our source of living water,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

C: Amen.

P: Look, here is water!

C: Here is our water of life! Alleluia!

***Prayer of the Day**

P: Let us pray.

C: Gracious and glorious God, you have chosen us as your own, and by the powerful name of Christ you protect us from evil. By your Spirit transform us and your beloved world, that we may find our joy in your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

WORD

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

First Reading:

Acts 1:15-17, 21-26

In the days between Jesus' ascension and Pentecost, Peter oversees the process whereby one of the members of the community of believers is chosen to be the twelfth apostle, in order to fill the vacancy created by Judas's treachery and death.

R: A reading from Acts, the first chapter.

¹⁵In those days Peter stood up among the believers (together the crowd numbered about one hundred twenty persons) and said, ¹⁶“Friends, the scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit through David foretold concerning Judas, who became a guide for those who arrested Jesus—¹⁷for he was numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry.” ²¹So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, ²²beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these must become a witness with us to his resurrection.”

²³So they proposed two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also known as Justus, and Matthias. ²⁴Then they prayed and said, “Lord, you know everyone’s heart. Show us which one of these two you have chosen ²⁵to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.” ²⁶And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles.

The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Responsive Reading:

Psalm 1

¹Happy are they who have not walked in the counsel of the wicked,
nor lingered in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seats of the scornful!

²**Their delight is in the law of the LORD,
and they meditate on God's teaching day and night.**

³They are like trees planted by streams of water, bearing fruit in due
season, with leaves that do not wither;
everything they do shall prosper.

⁴**It is not so with the wicked;
they are like chaff which the wind blows away.**

⁵Therefore the wicked shall not stand upright when judgment comes,
nor the sinner in the council of the righteous.

⁶**For the LORD knows the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked shall be destroyed.**

Second Reading:

1 John 5:9-13

God has borne witness to the gift of eternal life in Jesus Christ. Whoever believes in the Son of God believes in the witness of God and has the promise of eternal life.

R: A reading from 1 John, the fifth chapter.

⁹If we receive human testimony, the testimony of God is greater; for this is the testimony of God that he has testified to his Son. ¹⁰Those who believe in the Son of God have the testimony in their hearts. Those who do not believe in God have made him a liar by not believing in the testimony that God has given concerning his Son.

¹¹And this is the testimony: God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹²Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

¹³I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.

The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

***Gospel Acclamation:**

Lord, Be Glorified

In your church, Lord, be glorified, be glorified;

In your church, Lord, be glorified today.

In this reading the church hears Jesus' words on the night before his death—his prayer for his disciples and for all who would believe in him through their words.

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 17th chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

P: [Jesus prayed:] ⁶“I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. ⁷Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; ⁸for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. ⁹I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. ¹⁰All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. ¹¹And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one. ¹²While I was with them, I protected them in your name that you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost except the one destined to be lost, so that the scripture might be fulfilled. ¹³But now I am coming to you, and I speak these things in the world so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves. ¹⁴I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. ¹⁵I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. ¹⁶They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. ¹⁷Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. ¹⁸As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. ¹⁹And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.” ²⁰I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Children's Sermon

Sermon

*Sermon Hymn: *What a Friend We Have in Jesus* ELW 742

*Nicene Creed

We believe in one God,

**the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

For us and for our salvation

**he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven**

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,*
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

***Prayers of Intercession**

R: Rejoicing that Jesus is risen, and love has triumphed over fear, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need of good news.

A brief silence.

R: You sanctify us in your truth; your word is truth. Send your church out into the world to spread your love and joy. Embolden all bishops, pastors, and deacons to be faithful ministers of your word and sacraments. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

R: Your creation groans under the strain of pollution. Preserve melting glaciers and dwindling forests and help us all to be good and faithful stewards of your creation. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

R: Your people seek wisdom, understanding, and peace. Guide all those who govern and inspire them to work on behalf of the most vulnerable in our midst. Keep safe first responders, those serving in the military, and those whose duty it is to protect others. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

R: Your children need your loving care. Protect them from all harm. Comfort those in any affliction, *especially those we name at this time (Pause for people to be named)*. Support those who grieve and bring solace to those near death. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

R: Your Spirit lives within us here. Inspire the work of this congregation and unite us as one. Bless all the mothers in our midst, console those for whom this day is difficult, and gather us all under the care of your loving wings. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

R: Your saints dwell with you in light. Keep us ever thankful for those who have gone before us in faith. Inspire us by their witness. God of grace,

C: hear our prayer.

R: Into your hands, most merciful God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your abiding love; through Jesus Christ, our resurrected and living Lord.

C: Amen.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

*Sharing of the Peace

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

(10:30) Sr. Choir:

Praise to the Lamb

S. Pethel

Offering

*Offering Prayer

P: Risen One,

you call us to believe and bear fruit.

May the gifts that we offer here

be signs of your abiding love.

Form us to be your witnesses in the world,

through Jesus Christ, our true vine.

C: Amen.

*The Great Thanksgiving

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,

that we should at all times and in all places

give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,

for the glorious resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ,

the true Paschal Lamb who gave himself to take away our sin;

who in dying has destroyed death,

and in rising has brought us to eternal life.

***Thanksgiving at the Table**

P: In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

P: With this bread and cup
we remember our Lord's passover from death to life
as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

C: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

P: O God of resurrection and new life:
Pour out your Holy Spirit on us
and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Bless this feast.
Grace our table with your presence.

C: Come, Holy Spirit.

P: Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread.
Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world.
Breathe new life into us.
Send us forth,
burning with justice, peace, and love.

C: Come, Holy Spirit.

P: With your holy ones of all times and places,
with the earth and all its creatures,
with sun and moon and stars,
we praise you, O God,
blessed and holy Trinity,
now and forever.

C: Amen.

*Lord's Prayer

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

C: **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.**

Invitation to Communion

P: The risen Christ is made known to us
in the breaking of the bread.

Come and eat at God's table.



Distribution of Communion

Communion will be continuous. The ushers will invite you to come forward by the center aisle. You will be handed the bread with the words, "The Body of Christ given for you." You may respond with "Amen" or "Thanks be to God!" Step to the Communion Assistant and take the cup. They will speak the words, "The Blood of Christ shed for you." You may respond with "Amen" or "Thanks be to God!" Empty cups may be placed in the basket as you return to your seat by the side aisle.

If you prefer gluten-free bread, please let the Pastor know. If you prefer grape juice, please let the Communion Assistant know. If you prefer not to receive or have children who have not yet received, please let Pastor Tim know and he will offer a blessing.

Communion Hymns:

(8:00) TBOB 66 *Glorify Thy Name*

(8:00) TBOB 155 *Make Me a Servant*

(10:30) ELW 481 *Come to the Table*

(10:30) ELW 494 *For the Bread Which You Have Broken*

(10:30) ELW 492 *Eat This Bread, Drink This Cup*

***Post Communion Blessing**

P: May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C: Amen.

***Prayer After Communion**

P: Shepherding God,
you have prepared a table before us
and nourished us with your love.
Send us forth from this banquet
to proclaim your goodness
and share the abundant mercy of Jesus,
our redeemer and friend.

C: Amen.

SENDING

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

***Blessing**

P: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

C: Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

P: The God of resurrection power,
the Christ of unending joy,
and the Spirit of Easter hope
✠ bless you now and always.

C: Amen.

(8:00) Bell Choir: *Come, People of the Risen King* arr. L. Larson

***(8:00) Sending Song:**

Do, Lord!

Refrain:

Do Lord, O do, Lord, O do remember me!

Do Lord, O do, Lord, O do remember me!

Do Lord, O do, Lord, O do remember me!

Look away beyond the blue.

1. You're my light and my salvation, I won't be afraid!
You're the stronghold of my life, by You all things were made.
Foes attack me, hassle me, but I will never fade,
For I move in the strength of the Lord. *Refrain*
2. Though a host encamp against me, I will never fear!
Even though a war surrounds me, You are always near.
One thing I have asked of You that I will seek for sure
Is to live in the house of the Lord. *Refrain*
3. You will hide me in Your shelter in the day of strife.
You'll conceal me in Your tent or set me on the height.
Now my head is lifted up above the storms of night.
So I'll sing to the name of the Lord. *Refrain*
4. Glory be to God the Father and to God the Son.
Glory be to God the Spirit, ever Three in One.
As it was in the beginning, till our race is won.
We can live in the light of the Lord. *Refrain*

***(10:30) Sending Song:**

Crown Him with Many Crowns

ELW 855

***Dismissal**

P: Alleluia! Go in peace. Rejoice and be glad.

C: Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

***(8:00) Postlude:**

Do, Lord!

arr. by John Ylvisaker

***(10:30) Postlude:**

Hyfrydol

R. Prichard, arr. H. Rutz

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HAPPY EASTER! (YES, IT'S STILL THAT SEASON!) And happy Mother's Day to all who share a caring relationship with a mom or mom-figure. Welcome to worship.

ALTAR FLOWERS are given today in recognition of Pastor Tim & Angi's Wedding Anniversary, May 13th, by Pastor Tim.

ALTAR FLOWERS are given today in honor of Pastor Tim and Angi's Wedding Anniversary by Elaine Cordova.

BEGINNING JUNE 2ND THROUGH SEPTEMBER 1ST: Worship will be at **9 a.m. only** with Sunday School and Fellowship time to follow.

THE NEXT ENDOWMENT MEETING will be Tuesday, May 14th, at 7:00 p.m. There will be Croghan Colonial Bank Representatives at this meeting.

THE SCHEDULES FOR OUR HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETES are in the office on the shelf. Please consider attending and supporting our youth. Thanks.

MAX'S MILES 5K WALK – A Suicide Prevention Walk will take place on Saturday, May 18th, at Conner Park, Tiffin Road, Fremont. Registration at 8:30 a.m. Race starts at 9 a.m. Bake sale and Basket Raffles are available. Raffle Drawings at 10:15 a.m. Mental Health and Health Providers will have tables and information. Eagle 99 will be broadcasting live. Walkers and pets are welcome.



ALLISON GAZDECKI, daughter of Bruce & Annie Gazdecki and granddaughter of Jim & Kim Smith will be graduating from Fremont Ross High School and Vanguard Tech Center. She will attend Terra State Community College to study digital media.

HUNTER KAMINSKI, son of Jane and Robert Kaminski, is graduating from the University of Florida with a Master's degree in Environmental Engineering. He has accepted a job in Coral Springs, FL in Waste Water Management. He is the grandson of Parm Boyer.

MORGAN BOYER, daughter of Gary and Amy Boyer, is graduating from Heidelberg University with a Bachelor's Degree in History. She plans to attend graduate school in the area of archaeology. She is the granddaughter of Parm Boyer.

TYLER LOZANO, son of Suzanne and John Lozano and grandson of Anne Gerner, graduated April 27, 2024 from Michigan State University with a Bachelor's Degree with a major in Accounting! Tyler has accepted a position in Chicago as an Accountant beginning in October.

ALYSSA LOZANO, daughter of Suzanne and John Lozano and granddaughter of Anne Gerner, will graduate June 27, 2024 from Western Michigan with a Bachelor's Degree with a major in Human Resources. Alyssa has accepted a position near Kalamazoo where she previously interned in the Human Resource Department.

GRANT FAHLE, son of Mark & Katrina Fahle and the grandson of Den and Deb Fahle, will graduate from Tecumseh High School this spring with plans to attend Adrian College in the fall and major in business.

JADE KAYSER, daughter of Chris and Traci Kayser, will graduate from Gibsonburg High School this June. On July 29, she will depart for the United States Navy, basic training in Chicago. Jade is the "honorary" granddaughter of Larry and Donna Leow.

2024 GRADUATES CONTINUED

BRYN LEE CISCO, daughter of Jeff & Dawn (Vogel) Cisco and the granddaughter of Ray & Yvonne (Linder) Vogel, will graduate May 4th from Bluffton University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Speech & Language Pathology and Audiology (SLPA). Her minor study in college was psychology. Bryn will attend Ohio University graduate school fall semester.

GRADUATES: Please let the church office know of any upcoming graduates. We'd like to keep them in our prayers and send them words of congratulations and encouragement. Office Number is 419-332-6820 or send an email to faithchurch@amplex.net



WE ARE ASKING FOR A CARD SHOWER FOR:

Former Pastor of Faith Lutheran Church, Pastor Robert Barber for his 93rd Birthday, June 23, 2024. I am sure he would be very happy to receive cards from our congregation members. Cards may be sent to Good Shepherd Community Church, 12600 NW 4th Avenue, N. Miami, FL 33168. Thank you!



WANTED: Dave Ring is looking for more volunteers to learn how to run the camera and tape the services for Facebook. There is a need for both Sunday services. Youth are welcome as well. We really need more help and would love to teach you the ropes. Either talk to Dave or call him at 419-334-4145. There is a sign-up sheet in the coat room area. Please prayerfully consider giving it a try! Thank you!

ASSISTING TODAY

Pastor: Rev. Tim Miller **Organist:** Darla Brown **Pianist:** Becky Fox

Sr. Choir Director: Darla Brown **Flautist:** Marilyn Ring

Bell Choir Director: Darla Brown **Praise Choir Director:** Becky Fox

8:00 a.m.

10:30 a.m.

Greeter: Mike & Brenda Tooman Pat Forsyth & Kathleen McClain

Lector: Jackie Seibert Evan McBride

Acolyte: Caleb Seibert Evan McBride

Communion: J. Seibert/K. Smith A. Gazdecki & R. Brown

Counters: Annie Gazdecki* & Anne Gerner

Fellowship Time Host:

Altar Guild: Margie Roach & Marie Reiselt

ASSISTING NEXT WEEK

Pastor: Rev. Tim Miller **Organist:** Parm Boyer

Sr. Choir Director: Darla Brown

8:00 a.m.

10:30 a.m.

Greeter: Gil & Pat Root Ray & Yvonne Vogel

Lector: Judi Neill Barb Kocsis

Acolyte: Karly Paeth

Communion: B. Fox/J. Neill Barb Kocsis & Randy Koch

Counters: Cheryl Durnwald* & Randy Koch

Fellowship Time Host:

Altar Guild: Margie Roach & Marie Reiselt

PRAYING DAILY



For healing and hope: Pat Copley, Connie Diekman, Mary Ann Diekman, Roger Goehring, Della Humbarger, Denny Krumnow, Bill Leutenegger, Stan Moyer, Nancy Mylander, Bob Schneider, Dorothy Swedersky, Janet Tressler, Ray Vogel, Carnetta Weber. Emili Egbert, Rick & Brenda Myer, Olivia & Evelyn Perry.

For the Family of: Sandy Vollmar

For our Military: Noah Egbert, Troy Halfhill, Daniel Linder, Katie Olmstead, Tony Rozzi, Christopher Templeton, & Joshua Tooman.

For our Bishops: Bishop Christian Ndossa, Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, and NWOS Bishop Daniel Beaudoin and Staff

For our partner congregation in Bumila, Tanzania

And its pastor: Pastor Peter Magasi

FAITH ACTIVITIES FOR THE WEEK OF – May 12 to May 19

Sunday

May 12-----8 & 10:30 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion
 9:15 a.m. Sunday School & Fellowship Time

HAPPY MOTHER’S DAY!

Monday

May 13-----8 a.m. Men’s Group in Fellowship Hall
 10 a.m. Valley View Tea Time with God
 11:30 a.m. FLCW Visitation at Bob Evans

Tuesday

May 14-----7 p.m. Endowment Meeting

Wednesday

May 15-----6:30 p.m. Bell Choir
 7:30 p.m. Praise Choir
 7:30 p.m. Senior Choir

Thursday

May 16-----9-3 p.m. Fellowship & Sew Day
 3 p.m. Christ Care

Friday

May 17-----

Saturday

May 18-----9:15 a.m. Christ Care

Sunday

May 19-----8 & 10:30 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion
 9:15 a.m. Sunday School & Fellowship Time
 1-3:30 p.m. Hall Reserved for 4-H – Jackie Seibert

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES DUE

SUNDAY, MAY 5, 2024: ATTENDANCE: 136 – OFFERING \$3,979.00

GOSPEL MESSAGE

May 12, 2024

SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

United in Christ

The concept of the Trinity, one God, three in one, one in three, can be a little hard, sometimes, to get ahold of. But perhaps what scripture's witness to the Trinity boils down to is this: Jesus is in constant communication, continual, active relationship with the Father. The Father is in constant communication, continual, active relationship with the Son. And the Spirit is in and with and between both, always its own presence, but always, nonetheless, one in active relationship, one in ceaseless communication, with both the Father and the Son. Jesus prays that we may be "one" in the same fashion.

Conflict happens in the body of Christ all the time. Sometimes it is over matters of great significance: how we read scripture, how we are to conduct our lives, how the church is to think and act as it comes head-to-head with the constant pull and tug of the culture within and around it. Sometimes the conflict is personal. We resist the neighbor, and worse, out of hurt, anger, and anxiety. Sometimes the conflict can seem to be over a matter of pure nonsense: which way pickles should be sliced, and why they should be sliced that way.

Where and how, then, is our hope of being "one," as our Lord has so prayed?

It is in this: whatever our conflict, we belong to one another. Whatever our conflict, we are called to work at staying in active relationship, honest communication. We are not one, finally, when the issues between us wane, or cease. We are one because the Lord of life holds us together in the promise of his love even when powerful forces, at one and the same time, pull us apart. We are one because the body and blood of Christ have been given to each of us, and all of us.