

7th Sunday of Easter June 2, 2019

Year C – the Gospel of Luke

Lutheran Living the ^ Lectionary

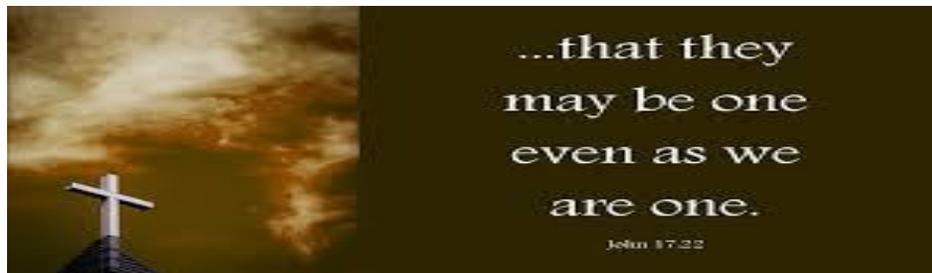
*A weekly study of the Scriptures for the coming Sunday since May 4, 2014.
An opportunity to make Sunday worship more meaningful and to make the rhythms of the readings part of the rhythms of your life.*

Available on line at:

- ✦ www.bethlehemplutheranchurchparma.com/biblestudies
- ✦ Through www.Facebook.com at “Living the Lutheran Lectionary”, “Bethlehem Lutheran Church Parma”, or “Harold Weseloh”
- ✦ All links in this on-line copy are active and can be reached using Ctrl+Click

Gather and be blessed:

- ✦ **Thursdays at 10 AM:** Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Road, Parma, OH 44134
- ✦ **Fridays at 7 PM in a house church setting:** For details, contact Harold Weseloh at puritaspastor@hotmail.com
- ✦ **First Sunday of the month at 11 AM:** St. Philip Lutheran Church, 11315 Regalia Ave., Cleveland, OH 44104
- ✦ **Tuesdays at 1:00pm (8pm Kenya time)** via Zoom to the Lutheran School of Theology - Nyamira , Kenya
- ✦ **On Facebook through Messenger** in a discussion group shared by people throughout the United States, Kenya and Uganda. Contact Harold Weseloh on Facebook Messenger.



<http://carolinasnalc.org/page/62/>

Hymn of the Day

Lutheran Service Book (LSB) 539 The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH) Not listed
“Christ is the world’s Redeemer”

Author, “Saint Columba (Irish: Colm Cille, 'church dove'; 7 December 521 – 9 June 597) was an Irish abbot and missionary credited with spreading Christianity in present-day Scotland. He founded the important abbey on Iona, which became a dominant religious and political institution in the region for centuries. He is the Patron Saint of Derry. He was highly regarded by both the Gaels of Dál Riata and the Picts, and is remembered today as a Christian saint and one of the Twelve Apostles of Ireland...” The link has an extensive biography.

- <https://hymnary.org/person/Columba>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=szOt5Eow4OI> Piano from TLH.
<https://www.patreon.com/AndrewRemillard>
- <http://kpschaw.blogspot.com/2013/11/p389.html> Solo acapella voice.
Site has original Latin hymn and additional background information.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EVolurCS50A> An organ prelude. “Enter His Gates with Praise: Eight Organ Preludes for the Church Year”, Matthew Macheimer, Concordia Publishing House
-

Commentaries have been chosen because the author has written in a way that compliments the reading. Not all of the commentaries are from Lutheran sources. They have been edited for length and in some cases for additional content that is not in keeping with a Lutheran understanding of Scripture. Links are provided for those who wish to read the entire commentary.

The Holy Bible, English Standard Version. ESV® Text Edition: 2016. Copyright © 2001
by [Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.](#)

1st Reading – “show which one of these two you have chosen...”

Psalm – “Behold, how good and pleasant it is...”

Epistle – “Surely I am coming soon.” Amen...”

Gospel – **“so that the world may believe that you have sent me.”**

Acts 1:12-26; Revised Common Lectionary (RCL), Acts 16:16-34 (Next week: Day of Pentecost, Genesis 11:1-9; RCL, the same reading or Acts 2:1-21)

“...It has now been 40 days+ that the disciples were in Jerusalem with Jesus. This would be bizarre behavior had Jesus not been arrested. The passover festival was long finished and none of them were really from Jerusalem. They were Galileans. They should have been home already and back fishing. However, they were not interested in returning to their pre-Jesus careers. What is also interesting was that Luke points out that the walk back to Jerusalem from the location where Jesus ascended was “a Sabbath day’s journey away”. This fact would only be important if it was the Sabbath day. A Sabbath day’s journey was the estimated distance that a person can travel before they are “working” or violating any travel regulations...

Another interesting detail given by Luke is that Mary was in the upper room with the disciples and Jesus’ (his) brothers...

Lastly in this passage, Luke details the replacement of Judas as well as the reasoning behind it. Peter quotes from Psalm 69:25 and 109:6-8. They are not really directly applicable to

the current situation except that they wished the wrath of God, which David was praying for, to be laid upon Judas. In Psalm 109 David prays evil upon his enemies. Part of that prayer is that his accuser would be replaced:

*6 Appoint someone evil to oppose my enemy;
let an accuser stand at his right hand.
7 When he is tried, let him be found guilty,
and may his prayers condemn him.
8 May his days be few;
may another take his place of leadership.
(Psalm 109:6-8)..."*

➤ <http://dustoffthebible.com/Blog-archive/2018/01/29/acts-devotional-commentary-acts-112-26-matthias-chosen-to-replace-judas/>

Matthias Chosen to Replace Judas

¹² Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away. ¹³ And when they had entered, they went up to the upper room, where they were staying, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas the son of James. ¹⁴ All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.^[a]

¹⁵ In those days Peter stood up among the brothers (the company of persons was in all about 120) and said, ¹⁶ "Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke beforehand by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus. ¹⁷ For he was numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry." ¹⁸ (Now this man acquired a field with the reward of his wickedness, and falling headlong^[b] he burst open in the middle and all his bowels gushed out. ¹⁹ And it became known to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the field was called in their own language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.) ²⁰ "For it is written in the Book of Psalms,

"May his camp become desolate,
and let there be no one to dwell in it"; [Cited from Ps. 69:25](#)

and

"Let another take his office." [Cited from Ps. 109:8](#)

²¹ So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, ²² beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these men must become with us a witness to his resurrection." ²³ And they put forward two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also called Justus, and Matthias. ²⁴ And they prayed and said, "You, Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which one of these two you have chosen ²⁵ to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas

turned aside to go to his own place.”²⁶ And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

- a. [Acts 1:14](#) Or *brothers and sisters*. In New Testament usage, depending on the context, the plural Greek word *adelphoi* (translated “brothers”) may refer either to *brothers* or to *brothers and sisters*; also verse [15](#)
- b. [Acts 1:18](#) Or *swelling up*

“Our lection today is the first recorded faith crisis of the Early Church: What to do with the betrayer, Judas. We are not given access to the debates and deliberations that precede Peter’s explication, but the first thing I notice in this text is that the time was ripe for a faith crisis.

An Ecclesial Crisis (or, After the Honeymoon Period)

The earliest followers of “the Way,” for they were not yet called “Christians,” met at an upper room in Jerusalem in fidelity to Jesus’ instructions (1:4). What was it like in that upper room, perhaps the very room in which the apostles had gathered for the Last Supper? Luke gives us a few indications; however, through a close reading of the text, I believe we can tease out several noteworthy elements.

1. They were frustrated. Jesus had strained their hopes that his resurrection from the dead might inaugurate the restoration of Israel. Jesus declared that it was not their business to know the time (1:7). So the ethnic hopes that they had hung on Jesus, had seen dashed on the cross, and then lifted to the pinnacle of expectation with his resurrection, were not yet. That’s the first marker for crisis: things don’t turn out the way we had hoped they would.

2. They were forced to wait. How hard it is to wait! How harder still it is to wait with others... the frustration of others can intensify our own irritation. Jesus commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what God the Father had promised, namely, the Holy Spirit (1:4). This is worth waiting for, to be sure, but how long? How long, O Lord?

3. There is a transition of leadership. Jesus, their Lord and guide ascended into heaven (1:9). For three glorious years Jesus was the one who had led their Bible study, who had preached their sermons, who had offered a fresh hermeneutic perspective on the Hebrew Scriptures. Moreover, he had told them what to do and they (mostly) followed his lead. He was now gone. Who might take up his mantle of leadership? Luke is careful to layout the potential candidates (cf. Luke 6:13-16).

4. Their only recourse was prayer. Luke is careful to tell us that they “continued together in prayer,” stressing the continuous action. How long did they pray? How long were they able to pray with one mind? We are not privy to this information...”

- https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1295
[Jacob Myers](#) Assistant Professor of Homiletics, Columbia Theological Seminary, Atlanta, Ga.

So what happened to Matthias after he was chosen to replace Judas?

“ No further information about Matthias is to be found in the [canonical New Testament](#). Even his name is variable: the Syriac version of [Eusebius](#) calls him throughout not Matthias but “Tolmai”, not to be confused with [Bartholomew](#) (which means Son of Tolmai), who was one of

the twelve original Apostles; [Clement of Alexandria](#) refers once to [Zacchaeus](#) in a way which could be read as suggesting that some identified him with Matthias;^[3] the [Clementine Recognitions](#) identify him with [Barnabas](#); [Hilgenfeld](#) thinks he is the same as [Nathanael](#) in the [Gospel of John](#).

Ministry

The tradition of the Greeks says that St. Matthias planted the faith about [Cappadocia](#) and on the coasts of the [Caspian Sea](#), residing chiefly near the port Issus.^[4] According to [Nicephorus](#) (*Historia eccl.*, 2, 40), Matthias first preached the Gospel in [Judaea](#), then in Aethiopia (by the region of [Colchis](#), now in modern-day [Georgia](#)) and was there stoned to death.^[2] An extant [Coptic Acts of Andrew and Matthias](#), places his activity similarly in "the city of the cannibals" in [Aethiopia](#).^{[a][5]} A marker placed in the ruins of the Roman fortress at [Gonio](#) (Apsaros) in the modern Georgian region of [Adjara](#) claims that Matthias is buried at that site.

The *Synopsis of Dorotheus* contains this tradition: "Matthias preached the Gospel to barbarians and meat-eaters in the interior of Ethiopia, where the sea harbor of Hyssus is, at the mouth of the river Phasis. He died at Sebastopolis, and was buried there, near the Temple of the Sun."^[2]

Alternatively, another tradition maintains that Matthias was stoned at Jerusalem by the local populace, and then beheaded (cf. [Tillemont](#), *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire ecclesiastique des six premiers siècles*, I, 406–7). According to [Hippolytus of Rome](#), Matthias died of old age in Jerusalem.

[Clement of Alexandria](#) observed (*Stromateis* vi.13.):

Not that they became apostles through being chosen for some distinguished peculiarity of nature, since also Judas was chosen along with them. But they were capable of becoming apostles on being chosen by Him who foresees even ultimate issues. Matthias, accordingly, who was not chosen along with them, on showing himself worthy of becoming an apostle, is substituted for Judas...

It is claimed that St Matthias the Apostle's remains were brought to Italy through Empress [Helena](#), mother of Emperor [Constantine I](#) (the Great); part of these relics would be interred in the [Abbey of Santa Giustina](#), [Padua](#), and the remaining in the [Abbey of St. Matthias](#), [Trier](#), Germany. According to Greek sources, the remains of the apostle are buried in the castle of [Gonio-Apsaros](#), [Georgia](#)...

➤ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saint_Matthias Aren't you glad you asked?

Psalm 133; RCL, Psalm 97 (Psalm 143; RCL, Psalm 104:24-34, 35b)

"At three verses, this is one of the shortest psalms in the psalter. Psalm 117, with two verses, is the only shorter psalm. Psalms 131, 133 and 134 each have three verses. It may be significant that those three are among the 15 Songs of Ascents..."

This is one of 15 psalms (120-134) that begin with the superscription, "A Song of Ascents." These psalms may have been sung by pilgrims ascending the road to Jerusalem (which was on a mountain) for the three great festivals: Passover, the Feast of Weeks (which

we know as Pentecost), and the Feast of Tabernacles (or) Levites may have sung them as they ascended the steps to the temple.

The Qumran manuscript includes "By David." Other manuscripts do not..."

- <https://www.sermonwriter.com/psalm-133-commentary/> Copyright 2018, Richard Niell Donovan

When Brothers Dwell in Unity

A Song of Ascents. Of David.

133 Behold, how good and pleasant it is
 when brothers dwell in unity!^[a]
² It is like the precious oil on the head,
 running down on the beard,
 on the beard of Aaron,
 running down on the collar of his robes!
³ It is like the dew of Hermon,
 which falls on the mountains of Zion!
 For there the LORD has commanded the blessing,
 life forevermore.

- a. [Psalm 133:1](#) Or *dwell together*

Psalm 133 is fourteenth of the fifteen "Songs of Ascents" in Book Five of the Psalter...

In three short verses, the singer of Psalm 133 summarizes the goodness and pleasantness of kindred living together in unity and likens that goodness and pleasantness to two powerful metaphoric images -- oil and dew...

In its position in the book of Psalms, then, Psalm 133 is a proclamation of delight, sung by pilgrims traveling up to Jerusalem. We have here, I think, a picture of the sincere and simple pleasure of people who are bound together by their covenant with the Lord and who, having come from a great distance, anticipate with joy standing together in the courts of the temple and in sitting down together at the feast table.

The ancient Israelite singers of Psalm 133 would most likely have remembered the proverbial wisdom saying upon which the psalm was based -- kindred who dwell together in unity being likened to good oil and dew. They still would have celebrated the joy and goodness of dwelling together as brothers and sisters. But the words of the whole psalm reminded the people that their family relationship was established not by blood, but by their mutual share in the community of God, a community that received blessing from its God. Psalm 133, as one of the Songs of Ascents, prepared the pilgrims coming to Jerusalem to celebrate together as family, as kindred living in oneness, the festivals of the Lord their God. The celebrations of festivals at the Temple in Jerusalem transformed pilgrims coming from different places into a family that for a holy time ate and dwelt together. Psalm 133 was a song of greeting, of anticipation, and of celebration of that holy time..."

- https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2381
Nancy deClaissé-Walford Professor of Old Testament and Biblical Languages, McAfee School of Theology, Mercer University, Atlanta, GA

Revelation 22:1-6 (7-11)12-20; RCL, Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20-21 (Acts 2:1-21; RCL, the same reading, unless it was used in place of the Genesis reading, then use Romans 8:14-17)

“The conclusion of Revelation has seemed to many interpreters to be a bit choppy, a barely-held-together conglomeration of leftover pieces, stumbling toward the close of the book.

Whether it is made more or less choppy by the piecemeal selection of verses in the lectionary, it is obvious that the lectionary has decided to omit the verses of warning. Such a move may be understandable, but it runs the risk of making the close of this book too comfortable and too unremarkable. Revelation's call to faithful witness is a matter of life and death, and the lectionary's careful selection of verses may make it difficult for us to hear that.

Despite the sense that these verses carry us along on a nearly chaotic rush to the end of the book, John is in fact bringing the book to a careful, deliberate, and theologically precise end. These verses are filled with echoes of the whole story John has told: "alpha & omega" (22:13; see 1:8), the washed robes (22:14a; see 7:14), the tree of life (22:14b; see 2:7 and 22:2), the gates of the city (22:14b; see 21:21, 25), the interpreting angel (22:16; see 1:1), the root of David and the morning star (22:16; see 5:5 and 2:28), the bride (22:17a; see 21:9), the water of life (22:17b; see 7:17 and 22:1). The overwhelming promises of God's salvation made throughout the book are reaffirmed here at the end with this cascade of images..."

- https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=576
Brian Peterson Professor of New Testament, Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, Columbia, SC

The River of Life

22 Then the angel^[a] showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb² through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life^[b] with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.³ No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him.⁴ They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.⁵ And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

Jesus Is Coming

⁶ And he said to me, “These words are trustworthy and true. And the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what must soon take place.”

⁷ *“And behold, I am coming soon. Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.”*

⁸ I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed them to me, ⁹ but he said to me, “You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers the prophets, and with those who keep the words of this book. Worship God.”

¹⁰ And he said to me, “Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near. ¹¹ Let the evildoer still do evil, and the filthy still be filthy, and the righteous still do right, and the holy still be holy.”

¹² “Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done. ¹³ I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.”

¹⁴ Blessed are those who wash their robes,^[c] so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates. ¹⁵ Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and the sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

¹⁶ “I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star.”*

¹⁷ The Spirit and the Bride say, “Come.” And let the one who hears say, “Come.” And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price.

¹⁸ I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, ¹⁹ and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.

²⁰ He who testifies to these things says, “Surely I am coming soon.” Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

21 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all.^[d] Amen.

- a. [Revelation 22:1](#) Greek *he*
- b. [Revelation 22:2](#) Or *the Lamb. In the midst of the street of the city, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life*
- c. [Revelation 22:14](#) Some manuscripts *do his commandments*
- d. [Revelation 22:21](#) Some manuscripts *all the saints*

*[Revelation 22:16](#) : [ch. 1:1](#), [ch. 1:4](#), [ch. 5:5](#), [Matt. 1:1](#), [[ch. 2:28](#); [Num. 24:17](#); [Isa. 60:3](#); [Matt. 2:2](#)]

“Surely, I am coming soon.” Thus the New Testament draws to a close.

Do we believe it? Do we live as if Jesus’ return was imminent? That is, do we follow the story to the end and hold tightly to this last canonical promise? After so much time, many of us have lost hold of this hope, felt this promise slip through our fingers as the years go by. But the promise is certain as Revelation closes. How can we embrace anew this last promise?

Revelation closes with a litany of short summaries...taken together, they encapsulate and summarize the theological convictions underwriting the visionary journey through which Revelation has just led us.

God's Promises Are Sure

First, John reaffirms the underlying conviction of the whole book. God is faithful and just. God's promises will be kept. God's faithful followers will not be ravaged by the cruelties of this world, for God will surely deliver them and us. Despite all evidence to the contrary, Jesus is coming and soon...

God's Justice is Graceful, God's Grace is Just

If God's promises are sure, what does this mean for all of us?...

First is the innumerable gathering of peoples from every corner of the world recorded in Revelation 7:9-17...

Second is the image of the tree of life that draws us to the beginning, to the narratives of the opening chapters of Genesis. That tree of life now finds root in the holy city of Jerusalem and all who are there taste its life-giving fruit.

Last, we are reminded of the gates of this magnificent city, gates found on massive, impregnable walls. And yet these gates remain flung open, unafraid of external threats (see Revelation 21:25).

And yet there remains some outside those walls, those who do not or cannot choose to enter a sacred city made clean, whole, and just by the ruler of all things. Verse 15 is excised from the lectionary reading but vital to a full understanding of Revelation's message. Without justice, God cannot be graceful. Without grace, God's justice is empty. John does not avert his eyes from the evils that populate the world and the ways those evils inflict the powerless. God's grace requires the just rejection of such forces of death and destruction.

A God We Can Trust

To imagine that there is any power beyond the Roman Empire is bold, requiring a huge leap of faith. To imagine that the pain and suffering that characterized the lives of so many in antiquity would be wiped away in the arms of a loving God is bold, requiring a huge leap of faith. To confess that God would not swerve from God's promises is bold faith. It is precisely this faith in God that brings us to the end of this book. It is precisely faith in Jesus' return that draws these Christians into a promised future.

Now, it is our turn. Can we trust in God and God's promises? Can we look forward to Jesus' return in hope and expectation, not trepidation? In short, can we have faith today?

Revelation can help people of faith develop an imagination and hope that answers these questions affirmatively. Revelation can help us if we can but draw our eyes from the dazzling visions that dot this book for a moment and see that behind them all is a simple but life-altering hope in a God that calls us all. That hope resonated in the seven churches that received this powerful book. It can still be true for us today. We too can look to Jesus and trust he is coming soon.

- https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1626 **Eric Barreto** Weyerhaeuser Associate Professor of New Testament, Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, N.J

“...REVELATION 22:18-19. IF ANYONE ADDS OR SUBTRACTS FROM THESE WORDS

These verses pronounce judgment on anyone who would add to or subtract from “this book” (v. 18)—“this prophecy” (v. 19). Reddish likens these verses to a copyright symbol that puts people on notice that infringements won’t be tolerated.

It is clear that those who formulated the (Revised Common Lectionary) lectionary have left out verses 15, 18, and 19, because those verses seem harsh and judgmental. However, those verses are part of the canon. We therefore have a responsibility to proclaim unpopular Biblical truth, just as a physician has a responsibility to tell patients the unhappy truth about their condition, even at the risk of offending them. The physician’s challenge is to find a way to present unpleasant news in a kind and caring way. The preacher’s challenge is much the same...”

- <https://www.sermonwriter.com/biblical-commentary/revelation-2212-14-16-17-20-21/> Copyright 2012, Richard Niell Donovan

Additional commentary on Revelation 22:18-19

“Christ did it all – don’t try to add to it or remove any of it. (don’t water this down)”

- Handwritten margin note by an unknown person in a copy of “Holy Bible, New Evangelical Translation, God’s Word to the Nations Edition”, 1992

John 17:20-26; RCL, the same reading (John 14:23-31; RCL, John 14:8-17, (25-27))

“The first verse in this week’s passage is one of my favorites in John’s Gospel, and maybe even in all of the Scriptures.

I know, I know, there are so many other great verses from John’s remarkable story: “In the beginning was the Word...”, “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,” “For God so loved the world...,” “In my house are many mansions...,” and more. Why, then, do I love this verse? Simply because in it we hear Jesus praying for us. Yes. Jesus...nearly two thousand years ago...is praying...for us – incredible!

Let’s set the scene. It’s Thursday evening, the night on which Jesus will be betrayed, handed over to his enemies, deserted by his friends, tried, convicted, and ultimately crucified. And knowing all that is to come, he gathers his closest friends, offers them parting words of encouragement and hope, and then prays for them. He prays that they may endure the challenges that come their way. He prays that they may discover strength in their unity. He prays that they will be drawn together as one as Jesus and the heavenly Father are one. And then he prays not only for them, but for all for who will believe in Jesus because of their testimony...”

- <http://www.davidlose.net/2016/05/easter-7-c-for-us/> **David Lose**
Senior Pastor, Mount Olivet Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, Minn.

“The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 17th Chapter”

²⁰ “I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹ that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, ²³ I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. ²⁴ Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. ²⁵ O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. ²⁶ I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.”

“This is the Gospel of the Lord” “Praise to You, O Christ”

“...The prayer is complex enough, even convoluted enough, that we can forget that it is a prayer. Indeed, we call it the “high priestly prayer” because it is not only intense, but also at portions – including in this reading – rather theologically dense. In some ways, in fact, it sounds more like a commandment – to be one; or more teaching – this time about his relationship with the Father; or even more promises – that they will one day be where Jesus is going and share his glory. But at heart it’s none of these things. It’s a prayer. It’s the prayer of one person praying for others, others whom he loves...”

That’s what Jesus does here. He prays for his disciples. He senses their anxiety, confusion, and fear, and so he prays for them. He knows they can bear no more, and so he prays for them. He knows he will soon leave them, and so he prays for them. And as he does, and whether or not they understand everything he says, he tells them that they do not have to do everything or even understand everything. He tells them that he is there to support him, that they are not alone, and that they are valued and loved.

It’s a powerful moment. And one of the amazing things about this passage is that Jesus doesn’t do this only for them, but also for us. As Jesus prays, “I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word...” And that includes us! We are the latest in a long line of persons who have been inspired and encouraged to believe because of the words and lives of those original disciples.

And what does Jesus pray for? “That they may be one.” That we may be one – one with each other, one with Jesus and the Father, one with ourselves. And that being one, we may have peace...”

- <http://www.workingpreacher.org/craft.aspx?m=4377&post=2566> [David Lose](#) Senior Pastor, Mount Olivet Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, Minn.



We would **never** be so presumptuous to suggest that Jesus was a Lutheran. Frankly, we'd have a stronger case if the Cana incident had resulted in a nice lager. But we're pretty sure that John was a Baptist.

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"...we are now in church because someone told us about Jesus. Whether it was a parent, friend, grandparent, pastor or whomever, someone told us about the good news that in Jesus we see that God loves us all, and inspired by this promise and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we came to believe.

But here's the thing: someone told the person who told us. And someone else told that person. And someone told that person as well...and so on and so on, all the way back to the testimony of these disciples who, despite their fear – both this evening and on Easter morning – nevertheless moved out of the closed room in the promise of resurrection and began to share the good news of Jesus with others.

And so when Jesus prays not only for these disciples but for those who believe because of them, he's praying for John's original audience and for all Christians ever since, all the way up to you and me and the people to whom we will preach this Sunday.

All too often, I think, Scripture can seem like a story told about people living such a long time ago that we may wonder what it has to say to us today. But in a few passages – especially in John's Gospel – there are what I think of as little doors that open up to invite us into the story itself to be active participants in the ongoing drama of God's love for all the world. We got one of those doors a few weeks ago when Jesus, in his encounter with Thomas, blessed all those who believed in Jesus even though they/we hadn't seen him. And that included John's community and us. And now we get another, as we hear Jesus on this significant night take time from everything else he was doing and had to say to take time to pray for us."

➤ <http://www.davidlose.net/2016/05/easter-7-c-for-us/> **David Lose**

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