

## **Seventh Sunday of Easter**

Sunday, June 1, 2025

### **Introduction to the day**

It is possible to hear in Jesus' high priestly prayer, a prayer he offered shortly before his death, the petitions of the ascended Christ for his own throughout history—to our day—and beyond. Jesus prays for us. In holy baptism we become believers in God, have our robes washed in the flood of Christ's forgiveness, and receive the gift of life forever with all the saints.

### **WELCOME MEMBERS OF AUGSBURG TO GRACE)**

### **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray.

O God, form the minds of your faithful people into your one will. Make us love what you command and desire what you promise, that, amid all the changes of this world, our hearts may be fixed where true joy is found, your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

### **FIRST READING: Acts 16:16-34**

A reading from Acts.

*Those who had enslaved a girl and used her powers to tell fortunes threw Paul and Silas into jail for ordering the spirit to come out of her and consequently ruining their business. In prison, Paul and Silas bring the good news of the gospel to the jailer and his family.*

### **PSALM: Psalm 97**

Rejoice in the LORD, you righteous. (Ps. 97:12)

### **SECOND READING: Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20-21**

A reading from Revelation.

*The ascended Christ, hidden from our sight, promises to come again. We eagerly pray, "Come, Lord Jesus," with all who respond to this invitation.*

### **GOSPEL: John 17:20-26**

The holy gospel according to John.

*Jesus prays that the life of his followers will be characterized by an intimate unity of identity with God. To be so identified with God means also to share in God's mission: to proclaim the word that will bring others into this same unity.*

### **GOSPEL MESSAGE - To Know God**

After her very first day of Sunday school, a little girl went up to her father, looked him directly in the eyes, and said, "I love you, Daddy, because God loved me first." She then declared boldly, "First Jesus, four nineteen!" It took only a few seconds for her father to realize that her Sunday school lesson for the day was based on 1 John 4:19, which says, "We love because he first loved us." Amazing, that already on her first day of Sunday school this child of God had learned that love comes first from Jesus and then is to be shared.

Once we understand the principle that we love because God loves us first, it is not difficult to reach other related conclusions. We forgive because God has already forgiven us. We bless because God has already blessed us. We walk with others because God walks with us. These are bold statements of union with God.

Jesus, in today's gospel reading, is not afraid to say that he and God are one. And more than this, God's intent is that each of us is to be one with God as well. To know God is to know love. To know God *is* to know forgiveness. To know God *is* to know blessing.

What happens when we approach the altar on Sunday and receive the sacrament? When we receive the bread and wine, we take in Jesus. In taking in Jesus, we become everything that Jesus is. This is truly, albeit mysteriously, an embodied reality of union with God. What a gift!

It has always been God's desire to be reconciled with us—for us to be in a relationship of peace and wholeness through Jesus and to live the life of the Spirit by clearly sharing with others everything we have come to know about the One who created us. In sharing love with others, we then live a life that says “thank you” to God.

## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

God of resurrection and new life, we come before you in prayer for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

Welcoming God, you invite all people to come and encounter your love. Give your church open hearts and minds to embrace all who seek your presence. Increase the capacity for cooperation between denominations and congregations. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Creating God, your might is seen in storms and in silence. Where drought threatens, bring rain. Where waters flood, ease them back. Where fire, earthquake, hurricane, or tornado destroy, shelter your people and restore your land. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Discerning God, fill the hearts of leaders with your passion for justice and mercy. Call the nations of this world to tables of peace and collaboration. Encourage governments to seek avenues of collective benefit and joy. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Abiding God, all people are held in your care. Accompany survivors of abuse, trauma, and exploitation. Strengthen our resolve to listen and advocate on behalf of all who are unnoticed. Hear our prayers for those close to our heart especially Shirley Glickman, Donna L. Hoffman, Cassie Jessup, Bill Lorbetskie, Glenda Panke, Barry Rogers, Marilyn Schneider, Danny Schultz, Doug Sell, Debbie Thom, Keith Weckwerth, and those in long term care facilities and senior residences. In this moment of silence we name out loud or in the quiet of our hearts, those who need your healing touch. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Rejoicing God, be with this congregation as summer begins in the northern hemisphere. Keep travelers safe. Keep the vulnerable cool. Invigorate summer ministry efforts in our community, and support the well-being of children and young people. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Loving God, the beginning and the end, you are with us throughout our lives. In gratitude for the saints who have died, we remember our sister Linda Boland, we look toward your coming again among us. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

We commend these and all our prayers to you, O God, trusting that you are always with us; in the name of Jesus Christ, our risen Savior.

**Amen.**

**LORD'S PRAYER**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**BLESSING**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

**Amen.**

**DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Share the good news.

**Thanks be to God.**

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