

6th Sunday after Pentecost

Sunday, July 5, 2026

Introduction to the day

The mystery of God's ways is sometimes hidden from the wise and intelligent. Jesus associates with those often excluded from the religious community. Like Paul, we struggle with our own selfish desires and seek God's mercy and forgiveness. We gather to be refreshed by Christ's invitation: "Come to me, all you that are weary." Gathered around word, water, and meal, we find rest for our souls.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

You are great, O God, and greatly to be praised. You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you. Grant that we may believe in you, call upon you, know you, and serve you, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

FIRST READING: Zechariah 9:9-12

The coming messianic king will inaugurate an era of disarmament and prosperity. Because of God's covenant with Israel, the people are designated as "prisoners of hope."

PSALM: Psalm 145:8-14

The LORD is gracious and full of compassion. (Ps. 145:8)

SECOND READING: Romans 7:15-25a

Life captive to sin is a catch-22 existence in which we know good but do not do it and do things we know to be wrong. Through Jesus Christ, God has set us free from such a futile existence.

GOSPEL: Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

Jesus chides people who find fault with both his ministry and that of John the Baptist. He thanks God that wisdom and intelligence are not needed to receive what God has to offer.

GOSPEL MESSAGE - Invited

Jesus offers a comforting invitation, "Come to me," amid a reflection on the mystery of God's wisdom and the failure by some to recognize it. Instead of making the search for wisdom into a game of hide-and-seek, Jesus sheds any presumption that God's wisdom belongs only to the elite or adventurous. He declares that the gift of wisdom is accessible and available not just for the smart or those who have earned it in some way; it is for the willing, the burdened, and the heavy-laden. Do not worry about going to find secret knowledge. No need to try harder to figure it out. Just receive his invitation to come.

But in our culture, with so much energy and attention devoted to what we can earn, how do we hear this simple invitation from Jesus? When we find that the wise and intelligent are no closer to obtaining this gift from God, does that give us pause? Is all the effort to find the hidden things Jesus is speaking about part of the burden he asks us to lay down? How can we experience the rest Jesus gives?

The expression "come to Jesus" has varied usage in the broader culture, but our gatherings for the Lord's supper reveal something about Jesus' invitation and God's gifts. When we receive the sacrament, we acknowledge a gift given—one that we need. When we come forward, we may not fully understand exactly how receiving those elements is "coming to Jesus," but the space is made. We can accept Jesus' invitation without knowing its full implications. And while the invitation is personal, it also helps us recognize that the community is united in a common response.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Trusting in God's steadfast love for all God has made, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

God our unity, your church flourishes in different languages, cultures, and movements. Grant us wisdom to discern when our yokes are too heavy, that we may live and serve in the freedom of your rest. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our life-giver, we grieve the pains placed upon our common home through war and neglect. What you have lovingly crafted, guide us to lovingly tend. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our freedom, you are no tyrant but bring peace. As this nation marks the anniversary of confederation, teach us our part in announcing peace for future generations. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our comfort, liberate all in our community who are captive to fear, who have become isolated or ill, or who are in any need especially Chris Burchat, Natasha Gagnon-Burchat, Shirley Glickman, Donna L. Hoffman, Glenda Panke, Marilyn Schneider, Carolyn Schroeder, Adam Schroeder, Heather Schruder, Doug Sell, Roy Zadow, 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. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our guide, we do not always have the strength to do the good we wish to do. Free us from the cycles of violence that bind us, that all know your liberation. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God our home, you model freedom through the love shared across communities of trust and goodwill. As we remember those now gone to eternal rest, we thank you for the gifts of life together. Today, we remember our sister Inge Vibe. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Grateful for your abundant provision and trusting in your goodness, we cast all our cares upon you, through the abundant grace of Christ Jesus. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

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

**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.**

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.

Announcements:

Sunday July 5th - Pentecost 6

9:00 AM – Grace – Holy Communion

Grace – Helpers – Greeter: June Barsalo; **Reader:** Donna Freitag

Communion Assistants: Carl and Rachel Dittburner

2:30 PM – Cemetery Service at St. John's, Sebastopol. They will have their annual Cemetery Service, As always, there will be familiar hymns, food for the soul. Following worship we will be visiting both cemeteries.

Monday, July 6 to July 10

Floor Waxing all week at Grace

Tuesday, July 7th

10:00 AM – Bible Study

Sunday, July 12th – 7th Sunday after Pentecost

9:00 AM – Grace – Service of the Word

Grace – Helpers – Worship Leader: Ron Schauer

Greeter: Joan Schroeder

Reader: Peggy Verch