**ACC Order of Service May 17th 2020 Sixth Sunday of Easter Moira Brehony**

Introduction; Welcome to our communion service today. Light a candle and prepare some wine/grape juice and bread and participate in our service. The readings are here in full and the sermon is available both in writing and on Mp3 player and has been prepared by Dr. Mark Rich who is presently in USA.

We continue to be in difficult times here in Arusha and across the world where Covid 19 has invaded our lives so we pray for those who are suffering, those who are mourning and those who are caring especially those on the front line. We are united in prayer.

Our entrance antiphon is from Is 48;20 Proclaim a joyful sound and let it be heard; proclaim to the ends of the earth; the Lord has freed his people, alleluia.

**Gathering Hymn, No 1221 Praise is rising with actions for children**

[**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NSBR-r9B\_94**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NSBR-r9B_94)

**Praise is rising,**

Eyes are turning to You, we turn to You.

Hope is rising, hearts are yearning for You, we long for You.

Cause when we see You, we find strength to face the day;

In Your presence all our fears are washed away washed away.

*Hosanna, hosanna, You are the God who saves us, worthy of all our praises.*

*Hosanna, hosanna, come have Your way among us, we welcome You here Lord Jesus.*

Hear the sound of hearts returning to You, we turn to You.

In Your kingdom broken lives are made new.

Cause when we see You, we find strength to face the day;

In Your presence all our fears are washed away, washed away.

*Hosanna, hosanna, You are the God who saves us, worthy of all our praises.*

*Hosanna, hosanna, come have Your way among us, we welcome You here Lord Jesus.*

**Let us bow our heads to pray;** Dear Lord and Father,

Thank you that you promise us that where two or three are gathered in Your name YOU are there in our midst. Lord we welcome You amongst us today and celebrate the gift of life that you have lavished upon each of us. Thank you for taking care of us and being with us during this difficult time.

**Confession of sins;**

Almighty God, we confess that we cannot free ourselves from sin’s power. We have sinned against you in thought, word and deed. We have not loved you with our whole heart. We have not loved our neighbor as ourselves. We have strayed from your ways like lost sheep, and have followed too much the desires of our own hearts. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and we have done those things which we ought not to have done. O Lord, have mercy upon us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, that we may want to do your will and glorify Your name. Amen.

**Absolution:** God gave His Son, Jesus Christ, that whosoever believes in Him will have everlasting life. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and will forgive us our sins and cleanse us. Confess, and believe that your sins are forgiven.

**The Word followed by a Hymn**

**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a5pZkLWZv-E**

**As the deer pants for the water,** so my soul longs after you.

You alone are my heart’s desire and I long to worship You.

*You alone are my strength, my shield, to You alone may my spirit yield*

*You alone are my heart’s desire and I long to worship You*

I want You more than gold or silver, only You can satisfy.

You alone are the real joy-giver and the apple of my eye.

*You alone are my strength, my shield, to You alone may my spirit yield*

*You alone are my heart’s desire and I long to worship You*

You’re my friend and You’re my brother even though You are a king.

I love You more than any other, so much more than anything.

*You alone are my strength, my shield, to You alone may my spirit yield*

*You alone are my heart’s desire and I long to worship You*

***Psalm 66 which can be recited by the group***

Cry out with joy to God all the earth;

O sing to the glory of his name

O render him glorious praise.

Say to God, “How awesome your deeds”

“Before you all the earth shall bow down,

Shall sing to you, sing to your name”

Come and see the works of the God

Awesome his deeds among the children on men.

He turned the sea into dry land;

They passed through the river on foot.

Let out your joy, then, be in him;

He rules forever by his might.

Come and hear, all who fear God;

I will tell what he did for my soul.

Blest be God, who did not reject my prayer,

Nor withhold from me his merciful love.

**Reading; 1 Peter 3; 13-22**

Who is going to harm you if you are to do good? But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. “Do not fear their threats; do not be frightened” But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behaviour in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. For it is better, if it is God’s will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the spirit. After being made alive, he went and made proclamation to the imprisoned spirits-to those who were disobedient long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through the water, and this water symbolises baptism that now saves you also-not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience towards God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into Heaven and is at God’s right hand-with angels, authorities and power in submission to him.

**The Gospel reading from John14; vs 15-21 Jesus promises the Holy Spirit**

***If you love me keep my commands. And I will ask the father, and he will give you another advocate to help you for ever – the spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realise that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. Whoever has my commands and keeps them is one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, I too will love them and show myself to them.***

**The sermon had been prepared by Dr. Mark Rick**



The teaching of John’s gospel about the Holy Spirit from God is quite unique, so it needs some explanation. We read here in John 14 that the Spirit is our Advocate – that means our defense lawyer – and it is also the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive. We read also in John 8 that the devil is “a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him.”

First, let’s understand a couple terms: “world” and “devil.” It is generally true in the New Testament but especially true in John that the word “the world” refers not to the Earth, to this planet, but rather to the System or the Establishment; in the first century that was the Roman empire. It is the network of human-created systems of power, control, and profit; and this system is led spiritually by the devil or Satan. This system does not exist to benefit everyone, but really only those who own it and rule it. Sometimes we little common people of earth benefit from the system, but in times of crisis we learn the truth that the system really exists to benefit the big people: the billionaires, their international corporations, and their political servants.

The word ‘devil’ is simply the Greek translation of the Hebrew word ‘ha-tsatan’ the Satan, or the Accuser, or the Prosecutor. Satan is the prosecutor, and the Spirit of truth is our defender. To live within the system as one of the common people is to live under constant accusation: that we little people are not really smart enough or don’t really work hard enough to be rich, to be one of the great ones. We don’t deserve to be their friends or to mix with them or to live them, which is why they live separately from us. Satan is the one who inspires the fear, greed, and hatred that maintain the power of this system.

In contrast, Jesus is creating the kingdom of God which especially welcomes the commoners and the outsiders; the community of life that is based on truth, while the system of the rulers of this world uses lies and death to increase and maintain their power over us. Their lies come from the devil, and those lies are necessary because they have to cover up their greed and to justify their killing. The System can’t survive without that accusation against us common people, because without it we common people would start to question the righteousness of huge wealth alongside poverty, homelessness, disease, and suffering.

As followers of Jesus we do not believe in or worship Satan, the ruler of this world. In our baptism rite we explicitly say that we reject the devil and all his works and all his ways. Jesus teaches us and gives us the nonviolent tools of life: forgiveness of sins and debts, sharing our possessions with each other and the poor, faith in God and each other, love for God and for each other, and truth-telling. He gives us these tools through the power of the Spirit. He names it the Advocate or Defender, which in a law-court is of course the opposite of the Prosecutor or Satan.

Satan uses fear, greed, and hate in order to divide us humans and to destroy our community and also God’s earth. Jesus brings us the opposite: faith, hope, and love in order to heal and save us, to bring us together, and to redeem God’s earth. In John’s gospel, when Jesus willingly died, he gave up to God his breath, his spirit. And then when God raised him from death, Jesus breathed upon his disciples, giving to us the Spirit of God that overcomes even death.

Thanks be to God that we have such a great Savior who loves us so greatly! Come Holy Spirit!

Questions: Can you see ways that the world’s system lies to people? What are those ways?

Can you see how the Holy Spirit leads us to tell the truth? Is the truth always easy to tell?

In what ways did Jesus tell the truth?

**Hymn; God sent His Son, they called Him Jesus;**

**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oPW9xYEyijQ**

God sent His Son, they called Him Jesus;

He came to love, heal, and forgive; He lived and died to buy my pardon,

an empty grave is there to prove my Saviour lives

*Because He lives, I can face tomorrow;*

*Because He lives all fear is gone;*

*Because I know He holds the future,*

*And life is worth the living*

*Just because He lives.*

How sweet to hold a new-born baby, and feel the pride and joy he gives;

But greater still the calm assurance, this child can face uncertain days because He lives

*Because He lives, I can face tomorrow;*

*Because He lives all fear is gone;*

*Because I know He holds the future,*

*And life is worth the living*

*Just because He lives.*

And then one day I’ll cross the river; I’ll fight life’s final war with pain;

And then as death gives way to victory, I’ll see the lights of glory and I’ll know He lives.

*Because He lives, I can face tomorrow;*

*Because He lives all fear is gone;*

*Because I know He holds the future,*

*And life is worth the living*

*Just because He lives.*

**Communal Prayers:** The service leader lead the family to pray; think of all the people that are suffering in Tanzania now as a result of Corona, those who are sick, those who are mourning and those who are working in hospitals and caring for people. Pray for your own family at this time. The service leader starts and finishes the prayers. The people who pray loud should end their prayer with “**Lord in your Mercy**” and everyone else will respond “**Hear our** **prayers**”

**COMMUNION**:

Leader: Let us pray. Blessed are you, Lord of heaven and earth. In mercy for our fallen world, you gave your only Son, that all those who believe in him should not perish but have eternal life. We give thanks to you for the salvation you have prepared for us through Jesus Christ. Send now your Holy Spirit into our hearts, that we may receive our Lord with a living faith as he comes to us in his Holy Supper.

**All; Amen. Come Lord Jesus**

Leader: In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord 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 in remembrance of me.” Again, after supper, he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this in remembrance of me.”

ALL: **Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name; your kingdom come; your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

**(**Distribution of bread and wine to follow)

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

ALL: **Amen.**

**Offertory Hymn My Jesus my Saviour** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5_aIauL2xKA>

My Jesus My Saviour, Lord, there is none like You.

All of my days I want to praise the wonders of Your mighty love.

My comfort, my shelter, tower of refuge and strength,

Let every breath, all that I am, never cease to worship You.

Shout to the Lord all the earth, let us sing, power and majesty, praise to the King.

Mountains bow down and the seas will roar at the sound of Your name.

I sing for joy at the work of Your hands, for ever I’ll love You, for ever I’ll stand

Nothing compares to the promise I have in You.

**Offerings can be made to ACC by using mpesa as follows;**

**ACC MPESA number +255 755 992 394 in the name of Nasieku Mollel (ACC Administrator’s last name).**

**Closing Prayer and Benediction**

Heavenly father, thank you for this service today and for the nourishing words we have read and listened to as food for our souls.

We ask you Lord to continue to be with us this day and this week and in a special way to be with those who are sick, those who are mourning their loved ones and those who are caring for others.

We are closing this service now but we ask You Lord to be with us and with our families in all that we do. In Jesus name we pray Amen.

**Closing Hymn, no 796 You shall go out with Joy.**

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=Lyrics+Go+Out+with+Joy&&view=detail&mid=2BE24130AFDF865B5F7D2BE24130AFDF865B5F7D&&FORM=VRDGAR&ru=%2Fvideos%2Fsearch%3Fq%3DLyrics%2BGo%2BOut%2Bwith%2BJoy%26FORM%3DVDVVXX>

You shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace,

and the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you.

There’ll be shouts of joy and the trees of the field shall clap, shall clap their hands.

And the trees of the field shall clap their hands, and the trees of the field shall clap their hands, and the trees of the field shall clap their hands, and you’ll go out with joy.