

## **ACC Order of Service July 12<sup>th</sup> Sixth Sunday after Pentecost Moira Brehony**

Introduction; Welcome to our ACC service today. Maybe you might like to light a candle in preparation for our service today.

We continue to worship outside the confines of our church here in Arusha but we hope and pray it won't be for long more. Covid 19 has invaded our lives and we are now experiencing the massive loss of jobs for people especially in the tourism and hospitality sectors. We pray for those who are suffering economically and we also pray for those who are mourning the loss of a loved one. We are united in prayer.

### **Our entrance antiphon is from Psalm 16:**

As for me, in justice I shall behold your face;  
I shall be filled with the vision on your glory.

### **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. We know this time will pass and with Your love we will survive.

#### **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.

**Hymn No 37 As the deer pants for the water**

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=as+the+deer+pants+for+the+water+song&docid=608053161482586678&mid=A17CD85708DA1124CA02A17CD85708DA1124CA02&view=detail&FORM=VIRE>

**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*

**First Reading; Isaiah 55: 10-13 Page 555 in church bibles**

As the rain and snow  
Come down from heaven  
And do not return to it  
Without watering the earth

And making it bud and flourish  
So that it yields seed for the sower and  
Bread for the eater  
So is my word that goes out from my mouth  
It will not return to me empty  
But will accomplish what I desire  
And achieve the purpose for which I sent it

You will go out in joy  
And be led forth in peace  
The mountains and the hills  
Will burst into song before you  
And the trees of the field  
Will clap their hands

Instead of the thorn bush will grow the juniper  
And instead of the briars the myrtle will grow  
this will be for the Lords renown  
for an everlasting sign  
that will endure for ever.

**Psalm 65: 9 – 13**

You care for the earth, give it water  
 You fill it with riches.  
 Your river in heaven brims over  
 To provide its grain.

You crown the year with your goodness  
 Abundance flows from in your steps,  
 In the pastures for the wilderness it flows

And thus you provide for the earth;  
 You drench it furrows,  
 You level it, soften it with showers,  
 You bless its growth

The hills are girded with joy  
 The meadows covered with flocks  
 The valleys are decked with wheat  
 They shout for joy, yes, they sing.

**Second reading Romans 8: Vs 1 – 11 Page 850*****Life through the Spirit***

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because, through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

Those who live according to the flesh, have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their mind set on what the Spirit desires.

The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God.

You however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ. But if Christ is in you, then even though your body is subject to death because of sin the Spirit gives life because of righteousness. And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of the Spirit who lives in you

Therefore, brothers and sisters, we have an obligation – but it is not to the flesh, to live according to it. For if you live according to the flesh you will die: but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.

**Hymn of Recollection no 1075**

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=jesus+all+for+jesus+youtube&view=detail&mid=6171D5CC195995CBE7CC6171D5CC195995CBE7CC&FORM=VIRE0&ru=%2fsearch%3fq%3djesus%2ball%2bfor%2bjesus%2byoutube%26cvid%3d61d9e66ce18c44639ffbe4facb034374%26FORM%3dANAB01%26PC%3dACTS>

**Jesus all for Jesus**

All I am and have and ever hope to be  
 Jesus, all for Jesus all I am and have and ever hope to be

All of my ambitions, hopes and plans I surrender these into Your hands  
 All of my ambitions, hopes and plans I surrender these into Your hands

For its only in Your will that I am free  
For its only in Your will that I am free

Jesus all for Jesus all I have and am and ever hope to be.

### **The Gospel reading Mathew 13:1-23**

*Jesus left the house and sat by the lakeside, but such crowds gathered round him that he got into a boat and sat there. The people stood on the beach, and he told them many things in parables.*

*He said, 'Imagine a sower going out to sow. As he sowed, some seeds fell on the edge of the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Others fell on patches of rock where they found little soil and sprang up straight away, because there was no depth of earth; but as soon as the sun came up, they were scorched and, not having any roots, they withered away. Others fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Others fell on rich soil and produced their crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty; Listen, anyone who has ears!' Then the disciples went up to him and asked, 'why do you talk to them in parables?' Because, he replied 'the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven are revealed to you, but they are revealed to them. For anyone who has will be given more, and he will have more than enough; but from anyone who has not, even what he has will be taken away. The reason I talk to them in parables is that they look without seeing and listen without hearing or understanding. So, in their case this prophesy of Isaiah is being fulfilled;*

- **You will listen and listen again, but not understand**
- **See and see again, but not perceive**
- **For the heart of the nation has grown coarse**
- **Their ears are dull of hearing, and they have shut their eyes,**
- **For fear they should see with their eyes,**
- **Hear with their ears,**
- **Understand with their heart,**
- **and be converted**
- **and be healed by me.**

*'But happy are your eyes because they see, your ears because they hear! I tell you solemnly, many prophets and holy men longed to see what you see and never saw it; to hear what you hear, and never heard it.*

*You therefore, are to hear the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom without understanding, the evil one comes and carries off what was sown in his heart; this is the man who received the seed on the edge of the path. The one who received it on patches of rock is the man who hears the word welcomes it at once with joy. But he has no root in him, he does not last; let some trial come, or some persecution on account of the word, and he falls away at once. The one who received the seed in thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of the world and the lure of riches choke the word and so he produces nothing. And the one who received the seed in rich soil is the man who hears the word and understands it; he is the one who yields a harvest and produces now a hundredfold, now sixty, now thirty'*

*The Gospel of the Lord*

## The sermon is given by Daudi Mmsemmaa

For children: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tb7bvF5Ucrk> The parable of the sower animation

### Sermon

If you skipped today's Bible readings, let me point you to Genesis 25:25 (NRSV) for a vivid newborn baby description, and save you a trip to the [dictionary](#): A *mantle* is "A loose sleeveless cloak or shawl."

The family tree in our reading from Genesis shows our roots in Abraham. We come from different places, but the world's Christians, Muslims, and Jews count Abraham as a kind of spiritual great-grandfather. It's something that makes us rooted together. Today I want to share a message about rootedness.

The idea of rootedness should resonate in a congregation like Arusha Community Church, where people come from many different countries and different parts of Tanzania. Some of my ancestors were from around Arusha, my paternal grandfather was born by what's now Levulosi Primary School, just a hundred meters or so from ACC. But I am also a migrant, born in another country. Some migrants get called expatriates. Others find themselves called refugees. East Africa has [3.25 million](#) of them. Tanzania has [284,000](#) of them in the UN camps. More than [5 million](#) more East Africans are displaced in their own countries.

From my life in this international congregation to my work with refugees, I have found so many migrants to have a deep sense of rootedness – no matter how far they are from where they started. But it can take different forms.

Sometimes, people look for rootedness in a real or imagined past. Other times, we are rooted in our different identities – our tribe, age set, career. Some of the people I admire most are rooted in their communities. And I think the ideal Paul suggests in Romans is for us to be rooted in Christ.

In this moment in time, there's so much economic suffering, a pandemic contagion that is still rising fast in nearby countries, and righteous anger against racial injustice in America and police brutality globally. Not in generations has there been as many migrants as now, and often they are mistreated in the places where they go to find refuge. Today's readings speak to me about rootedness – that the suffering and oppression we witness in this world is connected to a lack of rootedness in community and in Christ. You and I are empowered to be part of the movement of helping people increase their rootedness in Christ.

In the parable of the sower in the reading from Matthew, we want to be the seeds that take root, that grow in good soil. But the truth is the earth in which we find ourselves – our environments – differ so much. My question is how do we put down the kind of roots that Jesus is talking about for ourselves, and at the same time make the environment into the good soil for others?

#### 1. Let the spirit of life in Christ set you free (Romans 8:2)

- There are enough things that enslave us. Anger. Addiction. Poverty. Selfishness. Ignorance. Hunger. Our past. Predatory systems. Sin. In our reading in Romans 8, the author shows us a way to be set free from those things. We become rooted in Christ instead of rooted in our own bondage. But first, we have to recognize that we are enslaved.

#### 2. Have no condemnation (Romans 8:1)

- If you are also a migrant like me, having a heart of condemning people will prevent you from putting down roots where you are. We are Christians in *community*. It's even in the name of our church. We need to live in community and support those who are often condemned by people, thus growing the community of believers.

#### 3. Let God's spirit dwell in you (Romans 8:11)

- Our rootedness in Christ is a gift that comes from God's spirit. We increase that connection when we make time for it. In the stillness of the morning, clearing our minds and listening for the spirit. Seeing God in the people we meet or those we live with. Scheduling time to study the Bible.

So many of people have depression, insecurity, or self-esteem problems as part of our lives. If that describes you, know that God created you in his image and likeness and lives in you. If that describes people you know, help them to see how the spirit of the Lord lives in them. Remind them often of what Christ-like behaviours you see in them, helping them to become like the seed that is rooted in good soil. Help them see that the spirit of God that lives in them can shine so strongly that other people can't help but see it.

As we, the progeny of Abraham, set our own roots in Christ, we help others to do so, too.

**Some critical questions:**

1. Which seed is more free: The one that is rooted down, or the one that floats in the breeze? Why?
2. Paul spent two years unjustly imprisoned by the Romans, during which time he preached and taught about Jesus (Acts 28). Is it possible to be imprisoned and free at the same time?
3. What things can you do today to help others see the spirit of Christ that is within them?

– Daudi Msseemaa is on ACC's Evangelism & Outreach committee. He is a community development worker, serving with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**The Apostles' Creed**

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

**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 leads the family in praying; 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 have lost their jobs.

Pray for your own family at this time and in particular those who have been separated from you at this time.

Pray for rootedness that Daudi described to us in his sermon. We pray for rootedness in God at all times but especially when times like now are difficult to understand.

The service leader starts and finishes the prayers. The people who pray out loud should end their prayer with **"Lord in your Mercy"** and everyone else will respond **"Hear our prayers"**

Let us finish our prayer by saying together;

**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.**

**Offertory Hymn My Jesus my Saviour**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5\\_alauL2xKA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5_alauL2xKA)

*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. [htt](#)**

<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%3DVDVXX>

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.

**Thank you to all those who joined our service today Sunday July 12<sup>th</sup> 2020.**