

Third Sunday after Pentecost

June 21, 2020

Cross of Glory Lutheran Church

Brooklyn Center, MN

WELCOME

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, whose steadfast love is everlasting, whose faithfulness endures from generation to generation. **Amen.**

Trusting in the mercy of God, let us confess our sin.

Reconciling God,

we confess that we do not trust your abundance, and we deny your presence in our lives. We place our hope in ourselves and rely on our own efforts. We fail to believe that you provide enough for all. We abuse your good creation for our own benefit. We fear difference and do not welcome others as you have welcomed us. We sin in thought, word, and deed. By your grace, forgive us; through your love, renew us; and in your Spirit, lead us; so that we may live and serve you in newness of life. Amen.

Beloved of God, by the radical abundance of divine mercy we have peace with God through † Christ Jesus, through whom we have obtained grace upon grace. Our sins are forgiven. Let us live now in hope. For hope does not disappoint, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

WORSHIP SONG

Come, All You People

Come, all you people,
come and praise the Most High;
come, all you people,
come and praise the Most High;
come, all you people,
come and praise the Most High;
come now and worship the Lord.

Come, all you people,
come and praise the Spirit;
come, all you people,
come and praise the Spirit;
come, all you people,
come and praise the Spirit;
come now and worship the Lord.

Worship Team

Come, all you people,
come and praise the Savior;
come, all you people,
come and praise the Savior;
come, all you people,
come and praise the Savior;
come now and worship the Lord.

WORSHIP SONG

Good, Good Father

I've heard a thousand stories
Of what they think You're like
But I've heard the tender whisper
Of love in the dead of night
You tell me that You're pleased
And that I'm never alone

Worship Team

You're a Good Good Father
It's who You are, It's who You are
It's who You are
And I'm loved by You
It's who I am, It's who I am
It's who I am

I've seen many searching for answers
Far and wide
But I know we're all searching for answers
Only You provide
Because You know just what we need
Before we say a word

You are perfect in all of Your ways
You are perfect in all of Your ways to us

Love so undeniable I can hardly speak
Peace so unexplainable I can hardly think
As You call me deeper still
As You call me deeper still
As You call me deeper still
Into love love love

PRAYER OF THE DAY The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray . . . **Teach us, good Lord God, to serve you as you deserve, to give and not to count the cost, to fight and not to heed the wounds, to toil and not to seek for rest, to labor and not to ask for reward, except that of knowing that we do your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

SPECIAL MUSIC

Keith Williams

OLD TESTAMENT READING: Isaiah 43:1-3a

¹But now thus says the Lord,
he who created you, O Jacob,
he who formed you, O Israel:
Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name, you are mine.
² When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;
when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,
and the flame shall not consume you.
³ For I am the Lord your God,
the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.
I give Egypt as your ransom,
Ethiopia and Seba in exchange for you.
The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: Matthew 10:24-39

The holy gospel according to St. Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said to the twelve:] ²⁴“A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master;
²⁵it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher, and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household!
²⁶“So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. ²⁷What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you

hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. ²⁸Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. ²⁹Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. ³⁰And even the hairs of your head are all counted. ³¹So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.

³²“Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; ³³but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven.

³⁴“Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.

³⁵For I have come to set a man against his father,
and a daughter against her mother,
and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law;

³⁶and one’s foes will be members of one’s own household.

³⁷Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; ³⁸and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

“THE TIES NEVER END!”

Isaiah 43:1-3a Matthew 10:24-39

A woman was going to the grocery store one day and she couldn’t help but notice a father with a young toddler. The father had the boy in the shopping cart and was going through the store grocery shopping. The reason the woman couldn’t help but notice was because the little boy was screaming at the top of his lungs. As she went by, she heard the father say, “Freddie, it’s going to be OK. Just remain calm and don’t get upset.” The woman went through the store a little bit longer and when she got in the check-out lane, she saw that she was right behind the father and the little boy. She heard the father say again, “Freddie, we are in the check-out lane, we’re almost there, just stay calm, we’ll get in the car and be home soon.” The woman made her way out to her car in the parking lot and lo and behold her car was right next to theirs. She heard the father say to the little boy again, “It’s OK, Freddie, we’re getting in the car, we’re going home, just a few more minutes and we will be home.” The woman said to the father, “Sir, I just have to commend you for how patient you are with little Freddie.” The father said, “His name is Patrick. My name is Freddie!”

Maybe some of you have been there and done that! Well, “Happy Father’s Day” to all fathers. Thank you to all fathers! Thank you for all you have given and done for us! So, thank you to all fathers on this Father’s Day!

Friends in Christ, grace to you and peace. Amen.

Seventeen months ago you and I began a journey together and today we bring this journey to a close. I have truly enjoyed sharing this time of transition with you. With two floods and a pandemic plague, our time together has been anything but ordinary. You have many wonderful features as a congregation, and I thank you for the grace, love, and good humor that you have shared with me. I will always have warm thoughts as I remember you!

As I share with you this final sermon, I want to focus on the ties that never end. John Ylvisaker made this theme into the song “Borning Cry” that we will sing at the close of this message. We find in

our Old Testament reading for today that Isaiah the prophet had this as his theme too: ***I have loved you with an everlasting love. I will never let you go. I have redeemed you. I have called you by name. You are mine.***

I want to make this theme into a story this morning... the story of our lives. Listen and let me tell you the story of the "Ties That Never End." I give credit to Robert Munsch's book Love You Forever for some of the original ideas.

A mother holds her new baby and slowly rocks him back and forth, back and forth, and sings: *"I'll love you forever, I'll like you for always, as long as I'm living my baby you'll be."*

The baby grows and grows. He's two years old now. He pulls all the books off of the shelves, all the food out of the refrigerator, and even takes his mother's watch and flushes it down the toilet. His mother says: "This kid is driving me crazy!" But at night, when she puts him to bed, she holds him and rocks him and sings: *"I'll love you forever. I'll like you for always. As long as I'm living my child you will be."*

The little boy grows and grows. He's nine now. He doesn't want to take a bath, or go to bed, and he uses bad words and the "F" word when Grandma comes to visit. His mother wants to sell him to the zoo. But at night when he is finally sleeping, his mother tip-toes into the room and whispers as he sleeps: *"I'll love you forever. I'll like you for always. As long as I'm living my child you will be."*

The little boy grows into a teenager. He has strange friends and he wears strange clothes and he listens to strange music. Now his mother feels like she is in a zoo. But at night when her teenager is sleeping, she stands by the door of his room and prays this prayer: *"I'll love you forever. I'll like you for always. As long as I'm living my child you will be."*

The boy is now a young man, ready to leave home and go off to school. Mom and Dad help haul box after box of "stuff" into a small dorm room. And after a hug and good-bye, leave him in a strange place with other strangers. And Mom and Dad journey home to a house that has a vacant bedroom. And at night before Mom and Dad go to bed, they stand by the door of the empty bedroom and once again pray this prayer: *"I'll love you forever. I'll pray for you always. As long as we are living, our child you will be."*

The ties never end!

The weeks pass by. Then a call late one night.... disappointment, hurt, anxiety, struggling and homesick. Mom and Dad long to be there, to put an arm of reassurance around his shoulder and say: "We're with you...hang in there," and at best they try to give him some strength and reassurance from a distance. That night both Mom and Dad are awake and pray pleadingly: *"I'll love you forever. I'll pray for you always. As long as I'm living, my child you will be."*

The ties never end!

The story continues. He graduates, thankfully gets a job, then a wedding, a new home, a new member of the family. He's so busy and the calls are fewer. However, the prayers continue the same because the ties never end, and Mom and Dad keep praying and saying: *"I'll love you forever. I'll pray for you always. As long as I'm living my child you will be."*

Now the parents are older, and they call the son and say: "You'd better come home and see Mom because she's not doing very well." And when the son comes home mom tries to say the song:

"I'll love you forever. I'll like you for always..."; but she can't finish, and the son goes to his mom and hold her and rocks her back and forth and sings the song back to her: "Mom, I'll love you forever. I'll like you for always. As long as I'm living, my mother you will be."

The ties never end!

God tells us this too! If you can only remember one thing from all the words that I have shared with you these last seventeen months, please remember this: "You are a beloved child of God." You may have noticed that I've continually shared this truth with you during our time together. I did this for good reason! No matter what your age, God is always there for you and with you. Like a heavenly parent, God holds you in God's arms of prayer day after day. God's word cheers you on with just one more surprise. God keeps loving you from dusk till rising sun, till the evening gently closes in. God has provided for you a loving community of faith where you can be nourished in faith as well receive love, encouragement, and hugs from others. God holds you in loving parent arms and sings to you: *"I'll love you forever. I'll like you for always. Forever and ever my child you will be."*

With God, too, the ties never end!

And when you feel powerless and lonely, and worried and confused, and overwhelmed and uncertain, and you doubt yourself and don't feel cared for, remember that God is always with you. And not only will you feel the presence of God surrounding you, but you will also hear that familiar song of love and promise: *"I'll love you forever. I'll like you for always. Forever and ever my child you will be."*

"The ties never end!" With God, too, you are always a child yearning for a parent. No matter what our age, our hearts are restless till they rest in a parent God.

You see, you truly are God's beloved child! God understands, even when no one else does...and you know God listens, even when no one else does... and you know God holds you in loving, protecting, caring arms, holding you close, when no one else does. And you begin to feel comforted and safe and special and at home, because you know God loves you very much and tells you again those beautiful caring words that make you feel at home and tell you of the ties that never end: *"I'll love you forever. I'll like you for always. Forever and ever and ever, my child you will be."*

And in response you hug yourself close and respond to God and yourself with this new song: *"God, because you are my friend, I'll love you forever. I'll like me for always. I'll share your love with others. Because, O God, as long as I'm living my best friend you will be."*

Thank God for the ties that never end. May God bless you and keep you now, and in the days ahead, as you faithfully bear witness to "the ties that never end." Amen.

HYMN OF THE DAY

#732

I Was There to Hear Your Borning Cry

1 "I was there to hear your borning cry,
I'll be there when you are old.
I rejoiced the day you were baptized
to see your life unfold.
I was there when you were but a child,
with a faith to suit you well;
in a blaze of light you wandered off
to find where demons dwell."

2 "When you heard the wonder of the Word
I was there to cheer you on;
you were raised to praise the living Lord,
to whom you now belong.
If you find someone to share your time
and you join your hearts as one,
I'll be there to make your verses rhyme
from dusk till rising sun."

3 "In the middle ages of your life,
not too old, no longer young,
I'll be there to guide you through the night,
complete what I've begun.
When the evening gently closes in
and you shut your weary eyes,
I'll be there as I have always been,
with just one more surprise."

4 "I was there to hear your bawling cry,
I'll be there when you are old.
I rejoiced the day you were baptized
to see your life unfold."

CONFESSION OF FAITH Apostles' Creed

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,

who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, 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, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,

the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

OFFERTORY RESPONSE #186 Create in Me a Clean Heart

Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and uphold me with your free Spirit.

OFFERING PRAYER

God of goodness and growth, all creation is yours, and your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens. Water and word, wine and bread: these are signs of your abundant grace. Nourish us through these gifts, that we might proclaim your steadfast love in our communities and in the world, through Jesus Christ, our strength and our song. Amen.

PRAYERS of the PEOPLE

Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and for all people according to their needs. Almighty God, with gladness we give thanks for all your goodness. We bless you for the love which has created and which sustains us from day to day. We praise you for the gift of your Son our Savior, through whom you have made known your will and grace. We thank you for the Holy Spirit, the comforter, for your holy church; for the means of grace; for the lives of all faithful and good people, and for the hope of the life to come. Help us to treasure in our hearts all that our Lord has done for us and enable us to show our thankfulness by lives that are wholly given to your service. Lord in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Gracious God, we pray for communities, cities, and nations, may they become places where no one is excluded or discriminated against, where love is our rule and justice is our practice. Help us to end systemic racism. Lord in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Healing God, we pray for people in our lives and those unknown to us who need healing, care, and compassion: the hungry, those without homes, the refugee, and the stranger. We especially pray for those from Cross of Glory who are dealing with sickness, chronic pain, loneliness, or loss of employment. Lord in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Lord God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us. Lord in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

All these things and whatever else you see that we need, grant us, O God, for the sake of him who died and rose again, and now lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER Our Father, who art in heaven . . .

LITANY of FAREWELL

Leader: The church continues to be renewed and changed by God's Spirit. We welcome new people, while others leave. It is important that we recognize these times of passage, of beginnings and endings. Today we say farewell to Pastor Lee, whose interim ministry now comes to a close.

Pastor: I thank Cross of Glory Lutheran Church, its members and friends, for the love, kindness and support shown to me during this interim journey. I thank you for accepting my leadership. I recall with joy the many experiences that we have shared. As I leave, I carry with me many of these memories of the life we have shared together.

Congregation: We express thanks and gratitude for your time among us. We accept that you now leave us to follow God's leading in your life.

Leader: Do you, the members and friends of Cross of Glory, now release Pastor Lee from the duties of interim pastor?

Congregation: We do with the help of God.

Leader: Do you offer your encouragement for Pastor Lee's life and ministry in new circumstances?

Congregation: We do with the help of God.

Leader: Let us pray.

Congregation: God, whose everlasting love for all is trustworthy, help each of us to trust the future, which rests in your care. During our time together, we have experienced laughter and tears, hopes and disappointment. Guide us as we carry these cherished memories with us in new directions until the time when we are completely one with you and one another. In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

Pastor: May you and this congregation continue to be blessed under new leadership. (Benediction)

SENDING FORTH SONG #805

1 Lead on, O King eternal!
The day of march has come;
henceforth in fields of conquest
your tents will be our home.
Through days of preparation
your grace has made us strong;
and now, O King eternal,
we lift our battle song.

3 Lead on, O King eternal:
we follow, not with fears,
for gladness breaks like morning
where'er your face appears.
Your cross is lifted o'er us;
we journey in its light;
the crown awaits the conquest;
lead on, O God of might!

Lead On, O King Eternal!

2 Lead on, O King eternal,
till sin's fierce war shall cease,
and holiness shall whisper
the sweet amen of peace;
for not with swords loud clashing,
nor roll of stirring drums,
but deeds of love and mercy
the heav'nly kingdom comes.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Christ is with you.
Thanks be to God.

Privacy laws limit a hospital's ability to notify a church without the patient's consent when a parishioner is admitted. ***Please contact the church office about hospitalizations. Thank you!*** Members and Friends who are hospitalized, who have recently been hospitalized, or who ask for our prayers for healing:



***Bev Hoium
Marcy Hartlage
Vicky Jacobson***

***Gil Hartlage
Terry Stejskal
Nancy Hengel***