

# Pentecost #5

6-27-2021

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Vicar Karen Pugatch

## **Celebrate (Introduction)**

“A woman finds healing by touching Jesus’ cloak, and a girl is restored to life when he takes her by the hand. In both cases a boundary is crossed: in Jesus’ time the hemorrhaging woman was considered ritually unclean, polluting others by her touch, and anyone who touched a corpse also became unclean. In Mark’s gospel Jesus breaks down barriers, from his first meal at a tax collector’s house to his last breath on the cross as the temple curtain is torn in two. We dare to touch Jesus in our ‘uncleanness’ and to live as a community that defines no one as an outsider.”

We come together in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Opening Hymn:** [“We Come to You for Healing, Lord”](#)

**Psalm:** Psalm 30

“I will extol thee, O Lord, for thou hast drawn me up,  
and hast not let my foes rejoice over me.

<sup>2</sup>O Lord my God, I cried to thee for help,  
and thou hast healed me.

<sup>3</sup>O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from Sheol,  
restored me to life from among those gone down to the Pit.<sup>(a)</sup>

<sup>4</sup>Sing praises to the Lord, O you his saints,  
and give thanks to his holy name.

<sup>5</sup>For his anger is but for a moment,  
and his favor is for a lifetime.

Weeping may tarry for the night,  
but joy comes with the morning.

<sup>6</sup>As for me, I said in my prosperity,  
“I shall never be moved.”

<sup>7</sup>By thy favor, O Lord,  
thou hadst established me as a strong mountain;  
thou didst hide thy face,  
I was dismayed.

<sup>8</sup>To thee, O Lord, I cried;  
and to the Lord I made supplication:

<sup>9</sup>“What profit is there in my death,

if I go down to the Pit?  
Will the dust praise thee?  
Will it tell of thy faithfulness?  
<sup>10</sup>Hear, O Lord, and be gracious to me!  
O Lord, be thou my helper!”

<sup>11</sup>Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing;  
thou hast loosed my sackcloth  
and girded me with gladness,  
<sup>12</sup>that my soul<sup>10</sup> may praise thee and not be silent.  
O Lord my God, I will give thanks to thee for ever.”

**Hymn of Praise:** [“Come, Let Us Join our Cheerful Songs”](#)

### **Prayer of the Day**

“Almighty and merciful God, we implore you to hear the prayers of your people. Be our strong defense against all harm and danger, that we may live and grow in faith and hope, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.”

**1<sup>st</sup> Reading:** [Lamentations 3:22-33](#)

**2<sup>nd</sup> Reading:** [2 Corinthians 8:7-15](#)

**The Gospel:** [Mark 5:21-43](#)

**Hymn of the Day:** [“Lord Jesus Think On Me”](#)

**The Message:** ([Video Link](#))

This past year we have discovered that life often does not give us the best of our dreams but also brings to light our nightmares.. We have discovered the hard way that the realities of the pandemic, natural disasters, as well as living in a society which has gone far beyond the wild west of a by-gone era, can result in tragedy and even death. They can strike at any time, to anybody, anywhere. This has caused many to restrict their lives and place themselves in a self imposed bubble out of fear. Life then becomes a vicious cycle which is difficult to escape.

In reality to be caught up in this vicious cycle brings the death of the spirit and in some instances brings on death itself. That is why it is so important to always seek and find the positives in life while facing and living through times of pain and suffering, times of crisis, in order to bring hope. I have found throughout my life and you have heard this many times from me, in every negative there is a positive. One of these positives is a faith which leads us to know

that God's presence in life is not to advance pain and suffering but is there to provide healing, comfort, and hope.

The writer of Lamentations illustrates this in our first lesson this morning. Not included in our first reading this morning, the chapter begins with the lamenting of all the woes of personal and national suffering. It is reminiscent of the woes of Job but, unlike Job, he places the blame of the dismal situation of the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians on God: "I am one who has seen affliction under the rod of God's wrath, he has driven and brought me into darkness without any light; against me alone he turns his hand, again and again, all day long."

It is so easy to blame all of our troubles on someone else, especially God, when the real truth is that our problems just may be of our own making or the result of the natural order of life. Somehow we think we are exempt from any problems happening to our lives, we are exempt from disease, we are exempt from addiction, we are exempt from the wear and tear of aging, we are exempt from our own mindless, self-destructing acts and decisions. When the inevitable happens or those things occur as a result of the human processes of life, and are detrimental to us, then we blame God.

How often do we hear upon a tragedy, "Why did God let this happen to me?" How many times during a natural disaster such as a hurricane, flood, earthquake, or tornado, is God blamed? Why did God allow this to happen? It's like God had placed us in harm's way. But, the fact is that we are the ones who choose to defy the natural order by living in tornado alley, or in places which have reoccurring floods, hurricanes, and earthquakes. We do this because we live under the delusion that it can't possibly happen to me. Then when we are struck by the fury of the inevitable we say, "Why did God let this happen to Me" That's like parking your car on the blind curve along Amtrak's main line and then wonder why it was demolished and blame it on Amtrak. Was it the train's fault?

A basic notion of mankind is to think we can do anything we wish without suffering any consequences, after all, it's me and nothing can happen to me. Then when it happens we are surprised and bewildered and ask "Why me God, why me? Why did God let this happen to me?" This basic notion only leads to a state of hopelessness since it is discovered that life is no longer a bowl of cherries all for me and just to please me. This unrealistic view of life brings forth the "Woe is me" syndrome and the hopelessness that leads to despair and "I wish I was dead."

I have had an occasion to talk with a woman who is in her nineties and who exemplifies this. When I mentioned I was a minister she then got on her high horse, "Once believed in God but now I can't" I thought. maybe the church had disillusioned her. But, that was not it. It seems as though she blamed her predicament of old age on God. It wasn't that she was old but that she now could not do and enjoy the same life style as when she was young. Her life had been taken away. She must have thought that she could never get old, not her. So she said that "a loving God would never let this happen to me so there is no God in my life." She thought that she should have been exempt from all of the realities of human aging – "No. no, not me." She denied the realities of

life, viewed life as unfair to her (even though she had good health) and therefore was a miserable person. She was left blind to any joy in life, leaving her hopeless, and embittered. The merry-go-round of life had ended because she had denied the realities of life.

Now, even though the Hebrews attributed many of the acts of human tragedy to be the result of the hand of God's wrath, they also saw God as a God of hope and mercy. After the woe is me outpouring of the writer of Lamentations, he wrote: in our lesson today "The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. 'The LORD is my portion' says my soul, 'therefore I will hope in him.' The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul that seeks him."

These words are so true in that, even through our most trying times, even through illness, pain, and suffering, even going through the woes of this past year, God's steadfast love never ceases, it is still there. This comes through an undying faith in knowing that His mercies never cease, they never come to an end. These words were alive within the woman who had suffered the humiliation and pain of hemorrhages for twelve years. For twelve long years she had gone to physicians with the hope of being cured but each time she suffered the disappointment of not being cured. She could have given up. She could have wished she were dead. She could have blamed it all on God. Not this woman, she never gave up, never lost hope. She clung to her faith that God had not abandoned her and this gave her the hope and the spirit to see each day as the day in which she would find healing.

This hope, this faith was to be realized when she saw Jesus surrounded by a crowd. She had heard that this Jesus of Nazareth had performed many acts of healing. This was her chance. Her faith was so strong that she said to herself "If I but touch his clothes, I will be made well." She made her way through the crowd and touch his cloak - immediately she was made well. When Jesus discovered her He said, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease." What faith, what hope, what a positive spirit is seen within this suffering woman. "The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases, his mercies never come to an end...." Jesus then went on to the house of a synagogue leader whose daughter had just died. The family and friend had their hope dashed for any recovery and were mourning. But, even when all hope seemed to be lost Jesus raised the girl to life to the amazement of everybody. Again in Lamentations: "For the LORD will not reject forever. Although he causes grief, he will have compassion according to the abundance of his steadfast love; for he does not willingly afflict or grieve anyone."

The Good News is that God does not abandon us when we experience the crises of life no matter how they may have come to be. He is always there giving hope. We see this in Jesus for He never left a person suffering and in crisis. He fulfilled their hope by lifting them out of their human crises and made their lives whole again.

The ministry of the church is to follow in Jesus' footsteps. It is not to be silent or absent when suffering brings a person to the point of feeling hopeless. It must never give in to hopelessness for we have a message of hope and this message brings healing. We have a message which does not play the blame game for God's love is beyond all of that. We have a

message which never gives up on life for that life is a gift from God. Rather, we seek the fullness of life, now and throughout eternity. In light of this, we have the power of healing, for we have God's message of hope. This hope brings healing. We only need the faith to be God's messenger of this Good News of hope and healing. Through faith you and I can make a difference.

**Anthem:** ["There Is A Balm in Gilead" Concordia Choir](#)

**Offering\*:** ([On-Line giving Link](#))

We give thee but thine own, what e'er the gift may be; all that we have is thine alone, a trust, O Lord, from thee.

### **The Prayer**

Life's Creator and Father of all, grant us the wisdom to be able to realize and even guard against the destructive powers in life.. But when they may overtake us may we find the hope, faith, and the instruments we have to meet their challenge. Through it all may we always find the joys which we may have even though the days may seem dark. Never let us be totally overcome by any darkness but always be by our side to show us the way towards the light. Today we are especially reminded of those who have been the victims of the tragic building collapse in Florida. In their time of darkness be their comforter and loving Father.

We pray for all who need your comforting and healing presence especially Bob and Pat Allen, Heidi Brackbill, Parker Brennan, the Cronin family, the Elshafei family, the Fultz family, the Johnson Family, Robert Karner, Donna Mayhew, Wendy Neumann, Elise Oliver, Peter Olsen, David Otto, Dottie Reitz, Robert Reitz, Linda Rigby, Colin Shea, Jerry Shea, Jack Smith, the Spiegler family,, Della, Yongyin Sun, Esther and Buck Trautwein, Linda Williamson, Wyatt Lee Wolf, Pastor Jack,  
We ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen

### **The Lord's Prayer**

#### **The Benediction**

The Lord bless you and keep you;  
The Lord make His face shine upon you;  
The Lord lift up His presence upon you and give you peace. Amen

And now my brothers and sisters  
Live on knowing God's love,  
The joy of living this life of love,  
And the peace which only comes through the power of His presence within you.  
So live on in Love, Joy, Peace, and Power.

**Closing Hymn:** ["Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer"](#)

## **Announcements**

Services will be outdoors unless inclement weather conditions force us indoors. Face masks and social distancing outdoors are not required. An email will be sent late Saturday afternoons stating whether indoors or outdoors

Today, June 27, 6:00-8:00 – Jerusalem Mill Outdoor Concert, Kingsville, MD Features popular Celtic Baritone, . Charlie Zahn, \$15.00 –seniors \$10.00 Bring your own lawn chair. You may join with some of us for an evening meal at 4:15 PM . Bob Evans 4110 Wholesale Club Drive, Baltimore, MD 21236.

\*Offering to be sent to:

Bob Brackbill  
10274 Raleigh Tavern Road  
Ellicott City, MD 21042

Epiphany Lutheran Church  
9122 Sybert Drive  
Columbia Hills  
Ellicott City, MD 21043  
<https://www.epiphanylutherancolumbia.org>

Please note that you now have the opportunity of online giving with the link found after the offering designation or here: [https://tithe.ly/give\\_new/www/#/tithely/give-one-time/2627291](https://tithe.ly/give_new/www/#/tithely/give-one-time/2627291)