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Saint Paul’s Episcopal church

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**Seventh Sunday after Pentecost**

July 11, 2021

Pastor Dan Wilfrid

79 Cross Street, Gardner, Massachusetts ~ 01440

*Directions for participants: Words in* ***boldface type*** *are the congregation’s responses. Whether or not you are wearing a mask, please continue to safely distance from one another while in the pews. At the distribution of Holy Communion (bread only), please come forward one at a time, and return to your seat through the door to your right and from the rear of the nave down the center aisle.*

**Prelude:**  *Brethren, We Have Met to Worship ~* Setting by Melody Bober

**The Word of God**

Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

**And blessed be his kingdom, now and forever. Amen.**

**Collect for Purity**

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen**

**Gloria in Excelsis** *1982 Hymnal #S280*

**Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.**

**Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

**The Collect**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

**Let us pray.**

O Lord, mercifully receive the prayers of your people who call upon you, and grant that they may know and understand what things they ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to accomplish them; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

**First Reading:** **Amos 7:7-15**

This is what the Lord God showed me: the Lord was standing beside a wall built with a plumb line, with a plumb line in his hand. And the Lord said to me, “Amos, what do you see?” And I said, “A plumb line.” Then the Lord said,

“See, I am setting a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel; I will never again pass them by;

the high places of Isaac shall be made desolate,  
 and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste,  
 and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword.”

Then Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, sent to King Jeroboam of Israel, saying, "Amos has conspired against you in the very centre of the house of Israel; the land is not able to bear all his words. For thus Amos has said,

'Jeroboam shall die by the sword,  
 and Israel must go into exile  
 away from his land.' "

And Amaziah said to Amos, "O seer, go, flee away to the land of Judah, earn your bread there, and prophesy there; but never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king’s sanctuary, and it is a temple of the kingdom."

Then Amos answered Amaziah, "I am no prophet, nor a prophet’s son; but I am a herdsman, and a dresser of sycomore trees, and the Lord took me from following the flock, and the Lord said to me, 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel.'”

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm 85:8-13**

***Benedixisti, Domine***

**8  I will listen to what the Lord God is saying, \*  
 for he is speaking peace to his faithful people  
 and to those who turn their hearts to him.**

**9 Truly, his salvation is very near to those who fear him, \*  
 that his glory may dwell in our land.**

**10 Mercy and truth have met together; \*  
 righteousness and peace have kissed each other.**

**11 Truth shall spring up from the earth, \*  
 and righteousness shall look down from heaven.**

**12 The Lord will indeed grant prosperity, \*  
 and our land will yield its increase.**

**13 Righteousness shall go before him, \*  
 and peace shall be a pathway for his feet.**

**Second Reading:** **Ephesians 1:3-14**

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Gradual Hymn:** *“Celtic Alleluia”*

*All Sing:***Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia, alleluia!**

*Choir:* Speak, Lord, your servant is listening. Speak your words of wisdom, for the words you speak are everlasting life.

All Sing: **Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia, alleluia!**

**Gospel Reading:** Mark 6:14-29

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.

**Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

King Herod heard of Jesus and his disciples, for Jesus’ name had become known. Some were saying, “John the baptizer has been raised from the dead; and for this reason these powers are at work in him.” But others said, “It is Elijah.” And others said, “It is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old.” But when Herod heard of it, he said, “John, whom I beheaded, has been raised.”

For Herod himself had sent men who arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison on account of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife, because Herod had married her. For John had been telling Herod, “It is not lawful for you to have your brother’s wife.” And Herodias had a grudge against him, and wanted to kill him. But she could not, for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he protected him. When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed; and yet he liked to listen to him. But an opportunity came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his courtiers and officers and for the leaders of Galilee. When his daughter Herodias came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests; and the king said to the girl, “Ask me for whatever you wish, and I will give it.” And he solemnly swore to her, “Whatever you ask me, I will give you, even half of my kingdom.” She went out and said to her mother, “What should I ask for?” She replied, “The head of John the baptizer.” Immediately she rushed back to the king and requested, “I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter.” The king was deeply grieved; yet out of regard for his oaths and for the guests, he did not want to refuse her. Immediately the king sent a soldier of the guard with orders to bring John’s head. He went and beheaded him in the prison, brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl. Then the girl gave it to her mother. When his disciples heard about it, they came and took his body, and laid it in a tomb.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

**Gradual Hymn:** *“Celtic Alleluia”*

*All Sing:* **Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia, alleluia!**

**The Sermon ~ Pastor Dan Wilfrid**

**The Hymn:** *Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates* *#436, Verses 1,4,5*

1. **Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates;  
   Behold, the King of glory waits;  
   The King of kings is drawing near;  
   The Savior of the world is here!**

**4. Redeemer, come, with us abide;  
 Our hearts to Thee we open wide;  
 Let us Thy inner presence feel;  
 Thy grace and love in us reveal.**

**5. So come, my Sovereign, enter in!**

**Let new and nobler life begin;**

**thy Holy Spirit guide us on,**

**until the glorious crown be won.**

**The Nicene Creed**

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son, he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

**Prayers of the People ~** *Form III ~ The Book of Common Prayer p. 387*

Father, we pray for your holy Catholic Church;

**That we all may be one.**

Grant that every member of the Church may truly and humbly serve you;

**That your Name may be glorified by all people.**

We pray for all bishops, priests, and deacons;

**That they may be faithful ministers of your Word and Sacraments.**

We pray for all who govern and hold authority in the nations of the world;

**That there may be justice and peace on the earth.**

Give us grace to do your will in all that we undertake;

**That our works may find favor in your sight.**

Have compassion on those who suffer from any grief or trouble;

**That they may be delivered from their distress.**

Give to the departed eternal rest;

**Let light perpetual shine upon them.**

We praise you for your saints who have entered into joy;

**May we also come to share in your heavenly kingdom.**

Let us pray for our own needs and those of others. *Silence*

For particular concern:

Pat Lewis Aaron Harris

Suzanna Cleveland Jon Bowdoin

Lisa Boulanger Betty Caldwell

Cindy Richard Maureen Owens

Brandon Grenier Eveline Beauregard

Millie Williams Jay Hipkins

Jacob Decarolis Dawn Deluca

Cyndi Flanagan Andy LePage

Christopher Sharon Hamel

Kim Shea Bob and Lorene McLaughlin

Kathy Lewis Fred and Ginny Monette

Evelyn Wolenty Tom and Felicity Littlepage

Joni Pulnik Robin Hatch and family

We pray for those in military service.

We pray for our parishioners unable to be with us.

We pray for the repose of the soul**s** of Frank Wells and Linda Leclerc.

We give thanks for the birthdays of Pam Holden, Aslam Masih, Bria Monette-Harris and Sheamus Connors.

We give thanks for the anniversaries of Tom & Felicity Littlepage, Bonnie & Richard Cunningham and Cathy & Denis Meunier.

**The Collect**

Hasten, loving God, the coming of your kingdom; and grant that we your servants, who now live by faith, may with joy behold your Son at his coming in glorious majesty; even Jesus Christ, our risen Savior and Lord. **Amen**

**The Confession of Sin**

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

**Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.**

**The Absolution**

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

**The Peace**

The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also with you.**

**Announcements**

**The Holy Communion**

**Offertory Invitation**

Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God. *Ephesians 5:2*

**Offertory Hymn:** *Come, thou font of every blessing #686, All Verses*

**1. Come Thou Fount of every blessing  
 Tune my heart to sing Thy grace;  
 Streams of mercy, never ceasing,  
 Call for songs of loudest praise  
 Teach me some melodious sonnet,  
 Sung by flaming tongues above.  
 Praise the mount! Oh, fix me on it,  
 Mount of God's unchanging love.**

**2. Here I find my greatest treasure,  
 Hither by Thy help I'm come;  
 And I hope, by Thy good pleasure,  
 Safely to arrive at home.  
 Jesus sought me when a stranger,  
 Wandering from the fold of God;  
 He, to rescue me from danger,  
 Interposed His precious blood.**

**3. O to grace how great a debtor  
 Daily I'm constrained to be!  
 Let that goodness, like a fetter,  
 Bind my wandering heart to Thee.  
 Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,  
 Prone to leave the God I love;  
 Here's my heart, O take and seal it,  
 Seal it for Thy courts above.**

**Offertory**

Gracious God, we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us, - ourselves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your generosity and love.

**Receive them for the sake of the one who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**Eucharistic Prayer A** *~ from the Book of Common Prayer p. 361*

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, through Jesus Christ our Lord;

who on the first day of the week overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

**Sanctus** *1982 Hymnal, #S130*

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,**

**heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself; and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, “Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.”

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, “Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me.”

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ. By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **Amen**

**The Lord’s Prayer**

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

**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.**

**The Breaking of the Bread**

Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

**Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**

**Lamb of God** *sung by all*

**Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy on us.**

**Jesus, bearer of our sins: have mercy on us.**

**Jesus, redeemer, redeemer of the world:**

**Give us your peace, give us your peace.**

**The Distribution**

Prayer of Spiritual Communion

*A spiritual communion is a personal devotional that anyone can pray at any time to express their desire to receive Holy Communion, but is also fitting for use by those worshipping with us from home:*

**My Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. I desire to offer you praise and thanksgiving as I proclaim your resurrection. I love you above all things, and long for you in my soul. Since I cannot receive you in the Sacrament of your Body and Blood, come spiritually into my heart. Cleanse and strengthen me with your grace, Lord Jesus, and let me never be separated from you. May I live in you, and you in me, in this life and in the life to come. Amen.**

**Communion Music:** *Amazing Grace ~ Setting by Charles Callahan*

**Post Communion Prayer**

Let us pray.

**Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**The Blessing**

Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and for ever. **Amen**

**Sending Hymn: *Praise to the living God,*** *#372, Verses 1,4*

1. **Praise to the living God!**

**All praised be the Name,  
Who was, and is, and is to be,**

**For ay the same.  
 The one Eternal God,  
 Ere all that now appears,  
 The first, the last, beyond all thought  
 Through timeless years!**

**4. Eternal life hath he implanted in the soul;**

**His love shall be our greatest strength and stay awhile ages roll.**

**Praise to the living God! All praised be his Name**

**Who was, and is, and is to be, for ay the same.**

**Dismissal**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Postlude:** *Blessed Assurance ~* Setting by Melody Bober

Reader … Denise Whitney LEM …Denis Meunier

Organist … Judy Greenlees

Altar Guild … Denise Whitney Camera …Susan Hubbard

As Bob Owens retires from position of Sexton, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Bob for his two terms and years of service in that position. We thank Bob for all he has done, wish him good health, blessings of every kind, and for his continued presence at St. Paul’s.

We would like to welcome Anthony (AJ) Richard to the position of Sexton. Anthony is a senior at Fitchburg State University and a member of the Air Force ROTC program. If you see a young man working at the church introduce yourself to AJ. We welcome AJ to St. Paul’s.