

# Pentecost #5

7-5-2020

Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

J.V.Trautwein

## **Celebrate (Introduction)**

“The mystery of God’s ways is sometimes hidden from the wise and intelligent. Jesus association with those often excluded from the religious community. Like Paul, we struggle with our own selfish desires and seek God’s mercy and forgiveness. We gather to be refreshed by Christ’s invitation: “Come to me, all you that are weary. Gathered around word, water and meal, we find rest for our souls.”

## **Opening Hymn: [“Now We Join in Celebration”](#)**

1 Now we join in celebration  
at our Savior's invitation,  
dressed no more in spirit somber,  
clothed instead in joy and wonder;  
for the Lord of all existence  
putting off divine transcendence,  
stoops again in love to meet us,  
with his very life to feed us.

2 Lord, as round this feast we gather,  
fill our hearts with holy rapture!  
For this bread and cup of blessing  
are for us the sure possessing  
of your loving deed on Calvary,  
of your living self, our victory,  
pledge of your unfailing presence,  
foretaste here of heavenly gladness.

3 Lord, we share in this communion  
as one family of God's children,  
reconciled through you, our brother,  
one in you with God our Father.  
Give us grace to live for others,  
serving all, both friends and strangers,  
seeking justice love, and mercy  
till you come in final glory.

## **Psalm 145:8-14**

The Lord is gracious and merciful,  
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

<sup>9</sup>The Lord is good to all,  
and his compassion is over all that he has made.  
<sup>10</sup>All your works shall give thanks to you, O Lord,  
and all your faithful shall bless you.  
<sup>11</sup>They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom,  
and tell of your power,  
<sup>12</sup>to make known to all people your<sup>10</sup> mighty deeds,  
and the glorious splendor of your<sup>10</sup> kingdom.  
<sup>13</sup>Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,  
and your dominion endures throughout all generations.  
The Lord is faithful in all his words,  
and gracious in all his deeds.<sup>10</sup>  
<sup>14</sup>The Lord upholds all who are falling,  
and raises up all who are bowed down.

**Hymn of Praise:** [“Let All Things Now Living”](#)

### **Prayer of the Day**

“You are great, O God, and greatly to be praised. You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you. Grant that we may believe in you, call upon you, know you, and serve you, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.”

**1<sup>st</sup> Reading:** [Zachariah 9:9-12](#)

**2<sup>nd</sup> Reading:** [Romans 7:15-25](#)

**The Gospel:** [Matthew 11: 16-19, 25-30](#)

**Hymn of the Day:** [“Before You, Lord, We Bow”](#)

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

When faced with a challenge we may at first look upon it as totally beyond the realm of reason or reality. We even may wish it to just go away and be someone else’s responsibility especially if it is determined that it will place unwanted demands upon us. But, some challenges are unavoidable and inescapable. Therefore, facing and trying to overcome or meet the challenge becomes necessary. In doing so it may call upon all our intellectual and emotional ability no less our time, talents, and physical ability. The challenge may be so daunting that it places one’s patience and perseverance to the ultimate test. This is what is happening for some during this pandemic.

When the seemingly impossible challenge has been met, pride in the sense of accomplishment takes over to the point of celebration. When seen by others the accomplishment may bring well-deserved admiring words of praise and recognition. But, the state of euphoria so often is short lived when a fault finder begins to find everything which they saw as being wrong and not well-done. They even may go so far as to say that you overcame nothing. Some people are expert in deflating one's ego and sense of worth and accomplishment.

Fault finders can be very hurtful and destructive. The fact is they are a part of life and must be viewed in light of who they are. There are always going to be those who wear dark glasses and can only exist by being negative. There are always going to be those who will disagree with anything that doesn't come out of their own mouths or that which they produce or do. There will always be those so caught up in their own little world of unchanging thoughts and traditions that they do not know what it means to personally grow. They are the ones who are so closed minded in their own ways that they miss the gifts of life and of others which could bring them real joy.

Jesus was constantly confronted by fault finders. He, the Son of God, was rejected and run out of his own home town. Those whom he knew and loved, His friends and neighbors, found fault in Him, closed their minds, and shoved Him aside and out of their lives. Blasphemy was on their minds. Then again when He talked and ate with the tax collectors, the fault finders had their say, blasphemy! We know that He talked with the Samaritan at the well and saved the adulteress from being stoned. He even healed the sick on the Sabbath and raised the dead. For these acts and challenges which Jesus overcame they found fault in Him, ridiculed Him, rejected and eventually crucified Him in the name of the unforgiving mind set of blasphemy. Although His acts were great acts of love they found fault because their concept of love was drastically flawed. So instead of being on the side of the love which Jesus lived they chose to reject him. They could have celebrated His acts but they acted just the opposite - "We played the flute and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn."

But Jesus words of despair were not because He was rejected, not because He was scorned and ridiculed and labeled a blasphemer. His ego was not hurt or deterred by those who constantly found fault in Him and His loving acts. Rather His hurt was because of what those who constantly found fault and those who had closed their minds, were missing out on - the greatest gift of life, God's gift of forgiveness, love, and eternal life. They were missing out on the very kingdom of God which they said through their religiosity and traditions they were seeking. Right under their noses was the fulfillment of their dreams yet they missed the very kingdom of God of their search. But, sadly they were so involved in themselves and so quick to find fault that missed the real meaning of life. This was the despair of Jesus.

So many are so involved in their fixed or closed minds and patterns of life that they miss out on what life can really offer. They just cannot understand the newness of life which each new day can offer. They find fault in order to justify and promote self-mindsets. It is quite evident that there are many who even find fault with the principle which our founding fathers set forth in founding our nation that all men are created equal. Equality means that all individuals have the

freedom of intellect, beliefs, and conscience in order to pursue their dreams. Yet those who say they believe in the American dream deny the dreams of others by denying them the right to live, believe, and live their lives without being the brunt of bias or prejudice. They are fault finders in a very real sense who desire to elevate themselves above others. We are vividly seeing the results of this during this tumultuous and trying time even as we celebrate the declaration of independence which gave birth to the revolution freeing us from just such tyranny. During this time of our celebration the very existence of this great experiment is being tested.

People now are longing for more than a corrupt society has given. There is little equality no less equal justice. This causes a lack of self-worth or even any human worth. The outcome is the highest murder rate in the world today, suicides beyond belief, injustice, and civil unrest. All of this within what is supposed to be the American dream for all. Life has lost its meaning not only in the streets but within those who govern the nation. It has become a constant battle of fault finders.

The very message which can reverse this seeming impossible challenge is right under our noses. If we begin to live God's love the seemingly impossible will be possible - a people who live the reality that all men are created equal. Maybe we as Christians have not been vigilant enough with this message or maybe we feel rejected by the fault finders thereby withdrawing into our sanctuaries of despair. We need to follow Jesus' example and not fall into that trap. We are not alone and need not answer the challenges of today alone. Jesus reassures us, "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest."

In this Jesus' acknowledges that following Him and living His message is no easy task. All of the fault finders can weigh heavily upon us. Pride, ego, and even the sense of accomplishment and self-worth can be damaged. This can and most likely will happen. But Jesus promises, "Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls, for my yoke is easy and my burden light."

When we place all of the despair of today's trials in the hands of Jesus, by renewing our lives in the good news of God's love, our life will find rest and peace. We no longer will wrestle with despair for we will find the joy of love and forgiveness. We will know the real worth of life and be able to find renewed strength in facing the challenges which confront us, our society, and nation.

**The Anthem:** ["You'll Never Walk Alone"](#) Virtual Choir/Orchestra 15 Countries: 300 People

#### **The Offering\***

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**

Ever comforting God, we long to live a life which overcome hate with love in our nation. Give us the courage of our convictions so that we may overcome the injustices that we see every day and the corruption which is so evident within our governmental leaders. .During this time of turmoil let us see truth and not be led by false prophets. Give us the patience and the wisdom to make our present and future decisions out of love for each other.

Comfort all those who are suffering and dying from this pandemic. Be with their families during their suffering. Give us the wisdom and the strength of conviction to reach out to those who are in economic hardship. Continue to give the researchers and scientist the persistence and knowledge in order to find solutions which will neutralize and defeat this deadly virus bringing suffering to an end. Through it all we come to you with thanksgiving for all those who are risking their lives in order to bring healing and comfort to those who are in pain and facing death.

We pray for all whole need your comforting an heeling presence especially Pam Ash, Heidi Brackbill, Parker Brennan, Billy Jean Eddy & family, the Elshafei family, Betty Fultz, Darrell Garrison, the John Family, Robert Karner, Ray Lambert, Donna Mayhew, Bev and Jim Mertz, Nic Nelson, Wendy Neumann, Elise Oliver, Peter Olsen, Dottie Reitz, Robert Reitz, Terre Rones, Paul Sagal, Colin Shea, Jerry Shea, Tommy Shimer, Jack Smith, the Spiegler family, Linda Stephens, Randy Stephens, Yongyin Sun, Esther and Buck Trautwein, Pastor Jack, and all those who are suffering pain, and sorrow as a result of this pandemic.

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 come through the power of His presence within you.

So live on in Love, Joy, Peace, and Power.

**Closing Hymn:** ["Mine Eyes Have Seen the Coming of the Lord"](#)

\*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