

A photograph of a lush forest of tall, green pine trees. The trees are densely packed and reach towards a misty, mountainous background. The lighting is bright, suggesting a sunny day, with some shadows cast on the ground. The overall scene is peaceful and natural.

**An Agape Liturgy for
The Season after Pentecost**

Welcome to Christ Church!

We are so glad you have joined us for worship this morning. As we continue to recover from the recent COVID-19 pandemic, here are a few important guidelines for in-person services:

- Masks continue to be required for all indoor gatherings at this time.
- Social distancing is recommended between cohorts. Cohorts are family members and/or friends who agree to share close proximity.
- No one should sit directly behind anyone else unless they are part of a cohort.
- Distance between cohorts should be maintained.
- It is each parishioner's responsibility to follow social distancing guidelines, taking into consideration other parishioners' safety and level of comfort.

Gathering

Prelude

Mary Miller, Organist

Processional Hymn

#657 Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

(See bulletin p.14)

Opening Rite: Liturgy of Light

All standing, the Officiant greets the people with these words:

Officiant: Dear friends in the risen Christ, we gather today to celebrate the Lord's Day, and for a time to be united in prayer and praise with each other and those who have gone before us. Sunday has been called the Lord's Day because it was on this day that Jesus conquered sin and death and rose to new life. As we gather in person and online, let us be united in the spirit of Christ with the Church around the world and celebrate our redemption in Christ's suffering, death and resurrection.

Silence may be kept for a time.

Officiant: Light and peace, in Jesus Christ our Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

(Acts 1:8)

Prayer for Christ's Light

Candles may now be lit during the following prayer:

Officiant: O God, we give thanks for the gift of your light – shining on the first day of creation, guiding us through the wilderness, leading us to the land of promise.

People: You sent Jesus, Light of the world, to be our way of truth and life. Help us to follow him each day

and rest in him each night until at last we come to live with you in endless light. Through Jesus Christ our Lord and with the Holy Spirit we give you honor and glory, now and always. Amen.

The Confession

Officiant: Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbors.

Silence is kept for a time.

All: 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.

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

Opening Acclamation

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

People: And blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.

Opening Collect

BCP, p.355

Officiant: 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.**

Hymn of Praise

#671 Amazing Grace! How Sweet the Sound

(See bulletin p.15)

Collect of the Day

BCP, p.230

Officiant: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Officiant: Let us pray:

O God, you have taught us to keep all your commandments by loving you and our neighbor: Grant us the grace of your Holy Spirit, that we may be devoted to you with our whole heart, and united to one another with pure affection; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The Readings

The First Reading

2 Samuel 5:1-5, 9-10

All the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron, and said, "Look, we are your bone and flesh. For some time, while Saul was king over us, it was you who led out Israel and brought it in. The LORD said to you: It is you who shall be shepherd of my people Israel, you who shall be ruler over Israel." So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron; and King David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the LORD, and they anointed David king over Israel. David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years. At Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months; and at Jerusalem he reigned over all Israel and Judah thirty-three years.

David occupied the stronghold, and named it the city of David. David built the city all around from the Millo inwards. And David became greater and greater, for the LORD, the God of hosts, was with him.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

The Psalm of Response

Psalm 48

- 1 **G**reat is the LORD, and highly to be praised; *
in the city of our God is his holy hill.
- 2 Beautiful and lofty, the joy of all the earth, is the hill of Zion, *
the very center of the world and the city of the great King.
- 3 God is in her citadels; *
he is known to be her sure refuge.
- 4 Behold, the kings of the earth assembled *
and marched forward together.
- 5 They looked and were astounded; *
they retreated and fled in terror.
- 6 Trembling seized them there; *
they writhed like a woman in childbirth,
like ships of the sea when the east wind shatters them.
- 7 As we have heard, so have we seen,
in the city of the LORD of hosts, in the city of our God; *
God has established her for ever.
- 8 We have waited in silence on your loving-kindness, O God, *
in the midst of your temple.
- 9 Your praise, like your Name, O God, reaches to the world's end; *
your right hand is full of justice.
- 10 Let Mount Zion be glad
and the cities of Judah rejoice, *
because of your judgments.
- 11 Make the circuit of Zion;
walk round about her; *
count the number of her towers.
- 12 Consider well her bulwarks;
examine her strongholds; *
that you may tell those who come after.
- 13 This God is our God for ever and ever; *
he shall be our guide for evermore.

I know a person in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven – whether in the body or out of the body I do not know; God knows. And I know that such a person – whether in the body or out of the body I do not know; God knows – was caught up into Paradise and heard things that are not to be told, that no mortal is permitted to repeat. On behalf of such a one I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except of my weaknesses. But if I wish to boast, I will not be a fool, for I will be speaking the truth. But I refrain from it, so that no one may think better of me than what is seen in me or heard from me, even considering the exceptional character of the revelations. Therefore, to keep me from being too elated, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me, to keep me from being too elated. Three times I appealed to the Lord about this, that it would leave me, but he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness.” So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities for the sake of Christ; for whenever I am weak, then I am strong.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

The People remain seated for the Hymn and Gospel reading.

Gospel Hymn

WLP #780 Lord, You Give the Great Commission (See bulletin p.16)

The Gospel

Mark 6:1-13

Jesus came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. On the sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded. They said, “Where did this man get all this? What is this wisdom that has been given to him? What deeds of power are being done by his hands! Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his

sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him. Then Jesus said to them, "Prophets are not without honor, except in their hometown, and among their own kin, and in their own house." And he could do no deed of power there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and cured them. And he was amazed at their unbelief.

Then he went about among the villages teaching. He called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics. He said to them, "Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place. If any place will not welcome you and they refuse to hear you, as you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them." So they went out and proclaimed that all should repent. They cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

***People:* Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Joshua Smith

Affirmation of Faith

Officiant: Let us affirm our faith: Do you believe in God?

***People:* We believe in God the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth.**

Officiant: Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

***People:* We believe in Jesus Christ,
God's only Son, our Lord,
who 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 God.
He will come again to judge
the living and the dead.**

Officiant: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

***People:* We 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.**

The Prayers of the People

*You have been told what is good and what the Lord requires of you.
Act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with your God. (Micah 6:8)*

Officiant: Let us offer our prayers and petitions to Almighty God.

Reader: Engage us O God in the renewal of this Diocese towards your Christ-centered vision. Help us to realize that we are bound one to another in our common life and ministry. Spirit of God;

***People:* We are listening.**

Reader: Empower us, O God, to energize the ministry of all the baptized, making our communities of faith healthy and holy places of your presence that reach out in compassion and hope in Christ's name. Spirit of God;

***People:* We are listening.**

Reader: Unite us, O God, to be compassionate and not competitive, to be consoling and not controlling, to be faithful and not fearful as we continue to build relationships in communities centered on the vision of your reign. Spirit of God;

***People:* We are listening.**

Reader: Guide us, O God, to be responsible stewards here on earth, to prophetically witness to your reign. We pray especially for members of the United Nations, for Joseph, our President, for Michael, our Governor, Robert, our Mayor, and other civic leaders, that they may do justice and love mercy. Spirit of God;

***People:* We are listening.**

Reader: Deliver us, O God, from mistrust of one another and the misuse of our gifts. Help us to see in our worshiping communities, large and small, growing and struggling your grace and promise. Spirit of God;

People: **We are listening.**

Reader: Heal us, O God, in our communities, our families, and in the hidden places in our hearts. We pray for those in this community who are ill or in any kind of need, especially _____. Give us the courage and the grace to be your presence among them. Spirit of God;

People: **We are listening.**

Reader: Comfort us, O God, as we remember all those saints who have gone before us in light and have finished their course in faith. Give to the departed the comfort of your promise and presence, especially _____. Spirit of God;

People: **We are listening.**

Reader: Support us, O God, as we support each other, particularly in Justin the Archbishop of Canterbury, Michael our Presiding Bishop; Deon, our Bishop; Annette, our priest; and all who minister in witness in your Church. Spirit of God;

People: **We are listening.**

Reader: Teach us, O God, as we journey through the Christian life to continually engage each other, young and old, in the spiritual formation, discernment, discipleship and stewardship. Spirit of God;

People: **We are listening.**

Officiant: O God our help in ages past, our hope for years to come: You have journeyed with your people Israel and we pray you, journey with us now, in this time of dreaming, daring and doing. Walk beside us on the road that is ahead, calm our fears, awaken our hope, and open our hearts, as together we seek your guidance. Inspire us to discern your will for the Diocese of Missouri. May we put our whole trust in you as we look to Christ, the great shepherd of our

souls; who together with the Holy Spirit is alive and reigns now and forever. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Officiant: As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray:

People: **Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed by 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.**

Agape Hymn

#635 If Thou but Trust in God to Guide Thee (See bulletin p.18)

The Agape Blessing

The Officiant and the People give thanks for the gift of wine.

Officiant: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the universe.

People: **You create the fruit of the vine; we long for the day when you will once again refresh us with the cup of salvation in the Blood of your Son Jesus Christ. Glory to you for ever and ever. Amen.**

The Officiant and the People give thanks for the gift of our daily bread.

Officiant: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the universe.

***People:* You bring forth bread from the earth; we long for the day when we may once again partake of the bread of life the Body of your Son Jesus Christ. As grain scattered upon the earth is gathered into one loaf, so gather your Church in every place into the kingdom of your Son. To you be glory and power forever and ever. Amen.**

The Officiant and the People give thanks for the gift of food.

Officiant: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the universe.

***People:* You have blessed the earth to bring forth food to satisfy our hunger. Let this food strengthen us in the Eucharistic fast that is before us, that following our Savior in the way of the cross, we may come to the joy of his resurrection. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, now and for ever. Amen.**

The wine, bread and food may be consumed after the liturgy.

The Conclusion

Officiant: God of all creation, we gather on this first day of the week made holy by the resurrection of Christ, your Son. In the waters of baptism we were buried with him so that we might also rise with him and so share his victory over sin and death.

***People:* You have transformed our lives into the living stones that form your Church with Christ as the foundation stone. Strengthen our community's bond of communion and peace and deepen our solidarity with your Church throughout the world.**

Officiant: Rekindle within us this Sabbath day the vision of your kingdom so that our daily concerns and labor may find their proper perspective.

People: Fill our homes with the spirit of the Gospel and give us the grace to see the face of Christ in the people with whom we live. We raise our voices in praise and thanksgiving to you, O God; that we who have celebrated Christ's resurrection this day share in his eternal glory where he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Peace

Officiant: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: And also with you.

We greet each other in the name of the risen Christ.

Here at Christ Church, we consider gratitude and generosity to be spiritual disciplines. While some of us still can't be together to pass the collection plate to one another in person, we encourage you to offer your gifts and service in any way that makes the most sense to you.

If you are worshiping with us online, [click here](#) to contribute to our ongoing ministry.

The plate offering for the first Sunday of each month is dedicated to the Rector's Discretionary Fund.

Recessional Hymn

#637 How Firm a Foundation

(See bulletin p.19)

Announcements

(See bulletin p.20)

For more information about upcoming events at Christ Church and in the broader Cape Girardeau community, [click here](#) to sign up for our weekly email newsletter, or visit us online at christchurchcape.org.

The Sending

Officiant: Glory to God, whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine; Glory to him from generation to generation in the Church, and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Dear siblings in Christ, let us go forth into the world,
rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.

People: Thanks be to God!

Postlude

Mary Miller, Organist

A simple meal may now be shared.

Servers

Priest-in-Charge

Rev. Annette Joseph

Officiant

Carl Muench

Preacher

Joshua Smith

Reader

Kent Miller

Altar Guild

Randyn Heisserer-Miller

Organist

Mary Miller

St. Isidore's Guild

Matthew Heisserer-Miller

Vestry Counter

Nona Nan Chapman

Music reprint & broadcast licensing:

OneLicense A-705012

1 Love di - vine, all loves ex - cell - ing, joy of heaven, to
 2 Come, al - might - y to de - liv - er, let us all thy
 3 Fi - nish then thy new cre - a - tion; pure and spot - less

earth come down, fix in us thy hum - ble dwell - ing, all thy
 life re - ceive; sud - den - ly re - turn, and nev - er, nev - er -
 let us be; let us see thy great sal - va - tion per - fect -

faith - ful mer - cies crown. Je - sus, thou art all com - pas - sion,
 more thy tem - ples leave. Thee we would be al - way bless - ing,
 ly re - stored in thee: changed from glo - ry in - to glo - ry,

pure, un - bound - ed love thou art; vis - it us with
 serve thee as thy hosts a - bove, pray, and praise thee
 till in heaven we take our place, till we cast our

thy sal - va - tion, en - ter ev - ery trem - bling heart.
 with - out ceas - ing, glo - ry in thy per - fect love.
 crowns be - fore thee, lost in won - der, love, and praise.

Words: Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

Music: *Hyfrydol*, Rowland Hugh Prichard (1811-1887)

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1 A - maz - ing grace! how sweet the sound, that
 2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and
 3 The Lord has prom - ised good to me, his
 4 Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares, I
 *5 When we've been there ten thou - sand years, bright

1 saved a wretch like me! I once was lost but
 2 grace my fears re - lieved; how pre - cious did that
 3 word my hope se - cures; he will my shield and
 4 have al - rea - dy come; 'tis grace that brought me
 5 shin - ing as the sun, we've no less days to

1 now am found, was blind but now I see.
 2 grace ap - pear the hour I first be - lieved!
 3 por - tion be as long as life en - dures.
 4 safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.
 5 sing God's praise than when we'd first be - gun.

The melody may be sung in canon at distances of either two or three beats.

Words: John Newton (1725-1807), alt.; st. 5, from *A Collection of Sacred Ballads*, 1790; compiled by Richard Broaddus and Andrew Broaddus

Music: *New Britain*, from *Virginia Harmony*, 1831; adapt. att. Edwin Othello Excell (1851-1921); harm. Austin Cole Lovelace (b. 1919)

CM

WLP 780 Lord, You Give the Great Commission



1. Lord, you give the great com - mis - sion: "Heal the
 2. Lord, you call us to your ser - vice: "In my
 3. Lord, you make the com - mon ho - ly: "This my
 4. Lord, you show us love's true mea - sure: "Fa - ther,
 5. Lord, you bless with words as - sur - ing: "I am



sick and preach - the word." Lest the church ne -
 name bap - tize and teach." That the world may
 bod - y, this my blood." Let us all, for
 what they do, for - give." Yet we hoard as
 with you to the end." Faith and hope and



glect its mis - sion, and the gos - pel go un -
 trust your prom - ise, life a - bun - dant meant for
 earth's true glo - ry, dai - ly lift life heav - en -
 pri - vate trea - sure all that you so free - ly
 love re - stor - ing, may we serve as you in -



heard, help us wit - ness to your pur - pose
 each, give us all new fer - vor, draw us
 ward, ask - ing that the world a - round us
 give. May your care and mer - cy lead us
 tend and, a - mid the cares that claim us,

Refrain

with re - newed in - teg - ri - ty. }
 clos - er in com - mun - i - ty. } With the Spir - it's
 share your chil - dren's lib - er - ty. }
 to a just so - ci - e - ty. }
 hold in mind e - ter - ni - ty. }

gifts em - power us for the work of min - is - try.

Words: Jeffery Rowthorn (b. 1934); © 1978 Hope Publishing Co.
 Music: *Abbot's Leigh*, Cyril Vincent Taylor (1907-1991); © 1942.
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Unison or harmony

1 If thou but trust in God to guide thee, and hope in him through
 2 Sing, pray, and keep his ways un - swerv-ing; so do thine own part

all thy ways, he'll give thee strength what - e'er be - tide thee,
 faith - ful - ly, and trust his word, though un - de - serv-ing;

and bear thee through the e - vil days. Who trusts in God's un -
 thou yet shalt find it true for thee; God nev - er yet for -

chang - ing love builds on a rock that nought can move.
 sook in need the soul that trust - ed him in - deed.

Words: Georg Neumark (1621-1681); tr. Catherine Winkworth (1827-1878), alt.
 Music: *Wer nur den lieben Gott*, Georg Neumark (1621-1681)

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Descant

5 "The soul that to Je - sus hath fled for re - pose,

1 How firm a foun - da - tion, ye saints of the Lord,

2 "Fear not, I am with thee; O be not dis - mayed!

3 "When through the deep wa - ters I call thee to go,

4 "When through fier - y tri - als thy path - way shall lie,

5 "The soul that to Je - sus hath fled for re - pose,

5 I will not, I will not de - sert to its foes;

1 is laid for your faith in his ex - cel - lent word!

2 For I am thy God, and will still give thee aid;

3 the riv - ers of woe shall not thee o - ver - flow;

4 my grace, all suf - fi - cient, shall be thy sup - ply;

5 I will not, I will not de - sert to its foes;

5 soul _____ to shake, no,

1 What more can he say than to you he hath said,

2 I'll strength - en thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,

3 for I will be with thee, thy trou - bles to bless,

4 the flame shall not hurt thee; I on - ly de - sign

5 that soul, though all hell shall en - deav - or to shake,

5 I'll nev - er, no, nev - er, no, nev - er for - sake.”

1 to you that for ref - uge to Je - sus have fled?
 2 up - held by my right - eous, om - ni - po - tent hand.
 3 and sanc - ti - fy to thee thy deep - est dis - tress.
 4 thy dross to con - sume, and thy gold to re - fine.
 5 I'll nev - er, no, nev - er, no, ne - ver for - sake.”

Words: K. in John Rippon's *Selection*, 1787, alt.

Music: *Lyons*, att. Johann Michael Haydn (1737-1806); desc. Lois Fyfe (b. 1927)

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Announcements

For more information about upcoming events at Christ Church and in the broader Cape Girardeau community, [click here](#) to sign up for our weekly email newsletter, or visit us online at christchurchcape.org.

Centering Prayer

Every Saturday morning at 8:30 a.m. in the CEC Sanctuary.

Evening Prayer

Every Wednesday evening at 5:30 p.m. in the CEC Sanctuary. Sign up to help with our Evening Prayer service rotation by visiting our website or by contacting the office through our weekly email newsletter.

VBS Crafts and Planning Meetings

If you would like to help us prepare for this year's Vacation Bible School, the volunteer team will be meeting at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, July 7, to cut out items for crafts. The team will also be meeting again on August 3 at 6 p.m. for one last walkthrough before VBS starts on August 9.

Episcopal Confirmation

Bishop Deon Johnson will be visiting Christ Church on July 11, and will be confirming our very own Julie Wittenborn-Sikorski! Stick around after the service that day for a special Q&A Coffee Hour with Bp. Deon.

PFLAG Support

The PFLAG Support Group will be meeting at 3 p.m. on Sunday, July 18. Email pflagcape@gmail.com for more details about how to get involved.

CEC Vestry Meeting

Vestry meets on the third Tuesday of every month at 5:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall. All regular CEC attenders are welcome at these meetings.

Community Supper: July 25

CEC's Community Suppers continue to be take-out only for the time being. This month's community supper is being planned by Cheryl and Dan Essner. Contact clessner@semo.edu to find out how you can get involved.

Spread Hope Now School Supply Giveaway

Christ Church has been invited to help out with Spread Hope Now's annual school supply giveaway on Saturday, Aug. 7, from 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. at Malone Park in Sikeston. We have committed to donating 100 boxes of 10-pack Crayola markers (\$0.98 each at Walmart). Visit <https://bit.ly/3jxcWxR> to purchase the exact markers we need directly from the Walmart website.

#VBS2021: S.P.Y. Parables

Join Christ Church Cape from 6 - 8 p.m. on Aug. 9 - 13 for *S.P.Y. Parables*: An interactive VBS program about a **S**eed, a **P**earl, and **Y**east! Contact Rev. Annette (rector@christchurchcape.org) for more details about how to register your kiddo, or to volunteer with the program.

Food Pantry Volunteers Needed

The Red Door Jubilee Center Food Pantry is in need of volunteers throughout the months of June and July. We are open every Monday from 10 - 11 a.m., and every Thursday from 10 - 11:30 a.m. Contact CEC ministry intern Joshua Smith or CEC Vestry member Cheryl Essner for more information.

July 2021 Birthdays

- Harlie Waldon (July 1)
- Karen Cain (July 5)
- Judi Naeter (July 17)
- Matthew Heisserer-Miller (July 19)
- Dan Essner (July 27)

Notes on the Service

Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

2 Sam. 5:1-5, 9-10 • Ps. 48 • 2 Cor. 12:2-10 • Mark 6:1-13

The collect is from the earliest surviving mass book. It casts Jesus' summary of the Law into the form of a prayer for grace to love God and neighbor, for we cannot love without Love's help.

With Saul and all but one of Saul's sons dead, none remains to dispute David's claim to the throne, admit the tribes of Israel (Israel in the more restricted sense of the ten Northern tribes, from one of whom Saul had come.) That David was a commander under Saul is less than the whole truth, but in the enthusiasm of a coronation, it is not challenged, so the elders anoint David King at the most ancient shrine of Hebron, where Abraham had built an altar, and where he, Sarah, and other ancestors had been buried. But David considers Jerusalem, 20 miles north of Hebron, to be more suitable for his permanent capital. As the District of Columbia would not be part of any U. S. state, so Jerusalem was not a part of any tribe, but was still held by a clan of Canaanites, the Jebusites. So, according to three omitted verses, David seized its hilltop fort and made Zion his new national capital.

The seat of the king and later the site of the temple acquired cosmic significance, as a hymn for a temple procession, Psalm 48, illustrates.

Using metaphorical terms, Paul refers first to a mystical experience, then to a physical infirmity. With regard to both, many have guessed what exactly Paul meant. We might assume that his ecstatic experience, "caught up into Paradise," was like prophets' visions, but Paul says it is impossible to describe. Some have concluded that Paul's "thorn in the flesh" was malaria. Whatever it was, Paul maintains that his weaknesses and the persecutions he suffered served to make Christ's power the more conspicuous in him.

As Paul would "be content with...insults for the sake of Christ," Jesus himself endured contempt. He had been at first sensationally received at Capernaum, reported in Mark 1 & 2. But by Mark 3 opposition was building. When he goes home in Mark 6, he is met with disbelief. Jesus says that this is common to prophets. Like them, he too, has been called against most of his people. Last Sunday Jesus called a woman who believed in him "daughter," a member of his true family.

Many scholars understand Jesus' "brothers and sisters" to have been children of Mary and Joseph born after Jesus. However, those wishing to uphold Mary's perpetual virginity claim that they were Joseph's children by an earlier marriage, or they were cousins of Jesus, "brothers" in a loose sense.

Rev. Stephen Weissman
Saint Louis, Missouri



*We are a community forgiven and loved by God,
joyfully called to the work of reconciliation.*

christchurchcape.org