Ascension of Jesus

May 11, 2024

Theme: Transition

Presiders: Dotty Shugrue and Joan Pesce
Readers Anna Davis and Ann Cooke

Prayer Leaders
Joan Pesce
Joan Meehan
IT: Cheryl Brandi

Dotty: Welcome to our Church without walls, Mary Mother of Jesus, an inclusive Catholic Community, where all are welcome. At these difficult times, it is now more important than ever to gather together to support one another as "companions on the journey," a journey of the unknown.

Let us greet one another in love:

ALL: The Universal Christ in me greets the Universal Christ in you Namaste, Namaste, Namaste

Theme: Today our Gospel is about transition. Through the story of the Ascension Jesus is transitioning to another place leaving his followers behind, much to their chagrin.

As we share this Liturgy, let us allow ourselves to reflect on the transitions in our lives that brought us to new places of understanding. Whoever you are, where ever you are, just as you, are, you are welcome at our table.

Opening Song: Transfiguration - Carey Landry

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=djmSew8mhyU

The Liturgy of the Word

A Reading from The Acts of the Apostles Ch. 1:vs 6 - 11

Anna D: When the apostles came together, they asked Jesus, "Rabbi, is this the time when you will restore the dominion in Israel?" Jesus replied, "It is not for you to know the time or the period that has been set by Mother-Father God. You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth. As having said this as the apostles were watching, Jesus was lifted up and carried on a cloud out of sight. While Jesus was ascended up through the clouds, they were gazing up toward the heavens. Suddenly two figures in white robes stood before them. They said: People of Galilee, why do you stand looking toward the heavens? This Jesus who has been taken up from you into the heavens will return to you in the same way as you watched Jesus leave you."

These are the words of the apostle called John and we respond:

Let It Be So

Ann Cooke: These are the words adapted from a sermon of Rev. Frank Logue Bishop of the Episcopal Church of Georgia. "A Progressive Look at the Ascension"

The Ascension is not primarily about the physics or chemistry or astronomy of Jesus Christ's departure from earth. Rather, it concerns the mystery of Christ's presence and absence among us.

We proclaim Christ's presence among us. We proclaim his presence in the sacraments. We assert that we are the body of Christ; many of us believe that in the face of the hungry, homeless, and naked, we see the face of Jesus.

It's easy for us to claim Jesus is present to us. The words flow easily off of our lips, and onto our mission statements and into our sermons. It's also easy for us to end up celebrating ourselves and all the good things we do in the name of Christ. But it is not enough.

The story of the Ascension functions as the transition point when disciples became apostles. The transformation of being "apostles" to "followers" of Jesus.

On that day, the apostles received what they needed to change their focus to actually go out and do what Jesus did during his lifetime. As Christians, we are called and sent to do the same. Now is the time to stop looking upward and start looking out, for there is important work to be done in a hurting world. That is how we bear witness to God's presence in our midst.

These are the words of Rev. Frank Logue Bishop of the Episcopal Church of Georgia.

Together we say: LET IT BE SO

Dotty: Gospel Reading Adapted from John 17: 1-11

Jesus prayed, "Ama/Abba, the hour has come.
Give glory to your son, so that your son may glorify you.

I revealed your name to those whom you gave me.
Now they know that everything you gave me is from you,
because the words you gave to me, I have given to them,
and they accepted them and truly understood that I came from you.
And they have believed that you sent me.
I pray for them.

Now I will no longer be in the world,
but they are in the world, while I am coming to you."

These are writings from the early church by the one called John.

LET IT BE SO: ALLELUIA

Starter Homily

Joan P: Statement of Faith:

We believe in the Holy One, a divine mystery
beyond all definition and rational understanding,
the heart of all that has ever existed,
that exists now, or that ever will exist.

We believe in Jesus, messenger of the Divine Word,
bringer of healing, heart of Divine compassion,
bright star in the firmament of the Holy One's
prophets, mystics, and saints.

We believe that We are called to follow Jesus
as a vehicle of divine love,
a source of wisdom and truth,
and an instrument of peace in the world.

We believe in the Spirit of the Holy One,
the life that is our innermost life,
the breath moving in our being,
the depth living in each of us.

We believe that the Divine kin-dom is here and now,
stretched out all around us for those
with eyes to see it, hearts to receive it,
and hands to make it happen.

Prayers for the Community

Joan M: As we prepare for the sacred meal, we bring to our table our cares and concerns.

Response" I will Never Leave You Alone"

Holy One renew in our hearts our commitment to journey always in faith, hope and love as we reach out and support, comfort and love those closest to us, and all the needs of the people of our earth.

We bring to the table the people of war-torn countries around the world, and we pray for strength for them as they struggle for their survival and we pray that more generous hearts will contribute to their needs.

We bring to the table all those young people protesting against Israel or against Hamas, and bring violence to their protest putting other students in harm's way. May they awaken to the truth that only peaceful protests can bring peace to their countries, to the world.

Please share your intentions beginning with the words: I Bring to the table…

We pray for these and the community prayers written in our book of intentions as well as the unspoken concerns in our hearts. Amen.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Dotty: We are a priestly people. We are anointed. With open hands and hearts, let us pray our Eucharistic prayer in one voice:

Holy One, you are always with us. We are grateful for Your constant loving and unconditional presence. At times we forget that You are holding us, attending to us. We fall and You pick us up. You send strangers, friends and family to our aid. We are never without Your Light and Spirit.

You are with us in all the circumstances of our lives. Together we sing a hymn of praise:

Holy, Holy, Holy: Here in this Place by Christopher Grundy

https://youtu.be/sgkWXOSGmOQ

Joan P: Holy One as co-creators, we offer up bread, grown from seed and harvested from soil gifted to us through your Creation. We offer wine, grown from grapes blessed in the sunlight of your radiant Creation. We offer up our lives in loving gratitude and covenant. We celebrate our oneness with all creatures and living things, great and small in your precious family.

Joan M: We thank you for our brother, Jesus, who showed us so simply, so tenderly, how the world is in our hands. His faith in us, his

ability to connect with our best selves remains a shining gift. He had nothing in this world but your love, companions on the journey, and his very self. Together, that was more than enough, and that remains our clarity in the midst of confusion: the miracle of healing, new hope, nurturance, nourishment, liberation and life.

Dotty: We call upon you, Divine Spirit and with you we bless our bread of grain that comes from fields of the earth We call upon you, Divine Spirit and we bless this wine that come from the grape of the vineyards of the earth. We are once again reminded that we are the body of Christ in the world.

On the night before he died, Jesus gathered with friends, followers and those closest to him to celebrate the Seder supper. Afterwards, he showed how to humbly love and serve one another by washing the feet of his followers.

(Raise the bread at your table)

Returning to the table Jesus took bread from the table, he spoke the grace, broke the bread and offered it to them saying, "Take and eat, this is my very self."

(raise the cup of wine at your table)

Then Jesus took the cup of wine, spoke the grace, and offered it to them saying:

"Take and drink, this is the cup of the covenant

made new again through my life in you.

Whenever you remember me like this,

I am among you

Joan P: Holy One, you call us to speak truth to power; we will do so.

Holy One, you call us to live the Gospel of healing and justice; we will do so.

Holy One, you call us to be Your presence in the world; we will do so.

What we have heard with our ears, we will live with our lives: as we share communion, we will become communion, both Love's nourishment and Love's challenge.

Please receive communion saying, "I rise with Christ to new hope."

Communion Song: "I will Never Leave You" (fade out after 3.0)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QYwnO36TChc

Prayers After Communion:

Joan P: We celebrate the ever-abiding Presence of the Divine, the Universal Christ. Our universe, our world, our lives, though full of transitions and change the one constant remains: Divine Presence is always and forever, beyond the end of time is with us.

Joan M: Together we pray the Prayer of Jesus

O Holy One who is within, around and among us,
We celebrate your many names.
Your wisdom come; your will be done,
unfolding from the depths within us.
Each day you give us all that we need.
You remind us of our limits and we let go.
You support us in our power, and we act with courage.
For you are the dwelling place within us, the empowerment around us and the celebration among us, now forever. (Miriam Therese Winter)

Introductions – Thanksgivings - Announcements

Joan P: Blessing: We have reflected on the story of your Ascension. We are grateful for the opportunity to grow in our understanding of how the Ascension can be applied in our lives in this time in history. We renew our commitment to share the faith we have with those we meet on our journey through life, a faith rooted in our belief we do not need to wait for the return of Jesus, He is eternally present to us through the living Universal Christ. It is through our living in love that we image the Christ energy in us, in humanity, in all the creature in our world.

Song: Deer's Cry

https://youtu.be/xeVEGOPjJXQ?si=IcQVcZRto5d7R45R

Please send personal intentions to Joan Meehan.
Jmeehan515@aol.com
They will be added in our Community Prayer Book.

PO BOX:
Please send donations to:
Mary Mother of Jesus Inclusive Catholic Community
5342 Clark Road #3079
Sarasota, FL 34233

Website: marymotherofjesus.net