

Sunday, July 26, 2020

Greeting: God is good **all the time**. All the time **God is good**.

Question of the Day:

The “Spirit intercedes with” what?

a) all God’s glory b) swift justice c) decisive action d) sighs too deep for words

Hymn “Forever”

Call to Worship *From Psalm 105:1-6*

O give thanks to the Lord, call on his name,
make known his deeds among the peoples.

**Sing to him, sing praises to him;
tell of all his wonderful works.**

Glory in his holy name;

let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice.

**Seek the Lord and his strength;
seek his presence continually.**

Remember the wonderful works he has done,
his miracles, and the judgments he uttered,

**O offspring of his servant Abraham,
children of Jacob, his chosen ones.**

Prayer of Invocation

Spirit of life, we do not know how to pray as we ought. Meet us in words written, in words spoken; intercede for us with sighs too deep for words, until we shine with the hope that is hidden in our hearts, for we pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Genesis 29:14b-30 *The Message*

When Jacob had been with him for a month, Laban said, “Just because you’re my nephew, you shouldn’t work for me for nothing. Tell me what you want to be paid. What’s a fair wage?”

Now Laban had two daughters; Leah was the older and Rachel the younger. Leah had nice eyes, but Rachel was stunningly beautiful. And it was Rachel that Jacob loved.

So Jacob answered, “I will work for you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel.”

“It is far better,” said Laban, “that I give her to you than marry her to some outsider. Yes, stay here with me.”

So Jacob worked seven years for Rachel. But it only seemed like a few days, he loved her so much.

Then Jacob said to Laban, “Give me my wife; I’ve completed what we agreed I’d do. I’m ready to consummate my marriage.” Laban invited everyone around and threw a big feast. At evening, though, he got his daughter Leah and brought her to the marriage bed, and Jacob slept with her. (Laban gave his maid Zilpah to his daughter Leah as her maid.)

Morning came. There was Leah in the marriage bed!

Jacob confronted Laban, “What have you done to me? Didn’t I work all this time for the hand of Rachel? Why did you cheat me?”

“We don’t do it that way in our country,” said Laban. “We don’t marry off the younger daughter before the older. Enjoy your week of honeymoon, and then we’ll give you the other one also. But it will cost you another seven years of work.”

Jacob agreed. When he'd completed the honeymoon week, Laban gave him his daughter Rachel to be his wife. (Laban gave his maid Bilhah to his daughter Rachel as her maid.) Jacob then slept with her. And he loved Rachel more than Leah. He worked for Laban another seven years.

Romans 8:26-39 NRSV

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Response: *The Word of God, for the people of God! Thanks be to God!*

Time of Prayer

How Is It With Your Soul?

Call to Confession

Surely all of us need to seek forgiveness.

Unison Prayer

You know us, God, better than we know ourselves. You know the ways we scheme and manipulate for our own advantage. You are aware of how often our deeds fail to match the faith we claim. Help us to face ourselves with honesty.

(Time of silent prayer.)

Assurance

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? Nothing we have done, nothing we will ever do, is enough to separate us from the love of God made known in Jesus Christ. In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Thanks be to God! Let us join Jesus in praying:

The Lord's Prayer

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. Amen.

Answer to the Question of the Day

Time of Offering *Thank you to everyone for your faithful generosity.*

Offering Prayer

Holy One, receive these offerings as you receive our lives. Gather our false starts and uncertain efforts, our generosity and our reluctance. We endeavor to give with grateful and expectant hearts, and we trust that you will bring forth good from that which we offer today. We pray in the name of Jesus and by the power of your Spirit. Amen.

Message “For Good?” Rev. Joyce Rich

Blessing

May God, who searches the heart,

Jesus, whose love overcomes all division,
and the Spirit, which helps us in our weakness,
continue to lead us into life
that we may serve with abandon and joy. Amen. **And Amen.**

Hymn “10,000 Reasons”

Announcements

Read For Next Week: Genesis 32:22-31; Psalm 17:1-7, 15

*Liturgical resources drawn from: **Feasting on the Word® Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year A, Volume 2**, Kimberly Bracken Long, editor © 2014 Westminster John Knox Press; and **Taught by Love: Worship Resources for Year A**, Lavon Bayler © 1998 United Church Press.*