

The Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost, Cycle A – Proper 21 (Green) Sunday August 23, 2020

Presider: the Rev. Andrew Twiddy

Readings

EXODUS 1:8-2:10; PSALM 124; ROMANS 12:1-9; MATTHEW 16:13-20

Music for the day:

Hymns from *Common Praise* (1998)

Opening	455	Dear God, Compassionate and Kind
Reflective	500	The Servant Song (<i>“Will You Let Me Be Your Servant?”</i>)
At the Gospel	-	Mwamba ni Yesu *
At Prayer	620	How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds
Closing	438	O Jesus, I Have Promised (<i>tune: Day of Rest [572; 1938 Hymnal]</i>)

** lyrics :*

Mwamba ni-Yesu, Mwamba.

pronunciation: **Moo-WAM-ba, nee [“knee”] YAY-Soo, Moo-WAM-ba**

translation: “Jesus is the Rock” : ki-Swahili – a language of East Africa

The Collect – the Prayer of the Day:

**Living God,
you accept our stumbling faith,
our misplaced answers, our false horizons,
and through them you build a way of peace.
Empower and enable us to bind the wounds of the world,
and loose the bonds of oppression,
so that all may confess the grace that is your work alone;
through Jesus Christ, your anointed one. Amen.**

A Sign of Hope in a Time of Struggle and Oppression

Now a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. He said to his people, "Look, the Israelite people are more numerous and more powerful than we. Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, or they will increase and, in the event of war, join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land."

Therefore they set taskmasters over them to oppress them with forced labour. They built supply cities, Pithom and Rameses, for Pharaoh. But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread, so that the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites.

The Egyptians became ruthless in imposing tasks on the Israelites, and made their lives bitter with hard service in mortar and brick and in every kind of field labour. They were ruthless in all the tasks that they imposed on them.

The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, "When you act as midwives to the Hebrew women, and see them on the birthstool, if it is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, she shall live."

But the midwives feared God; they did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but they let the boys live. So the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and said to them, "Why have you done this, and allowed the boys to live?" The midwives said to Pharaoh, "Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them."

So God dealt well with the midwives; and the people multiplied and became very strong. And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families.

Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, "Every boy that is born to the Hebrews you shall throw into the Nile, but you shall let every girl live."

Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman. The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was a fine baby, she hid him three months. When she could hide him no longer she got a papyrus basket for him, and plastered it with bitumen and pitch; she put the child in it and placed it among

the reeds on the bank of the river. His sister stood at a distance, to see what would happen to him.

The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her attendants walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid to bring it. When she opened it, she saw the child. He was crying, and she took pity on him, "This must be one of the Hebrews' children," she said.

Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and get you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?" Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Yes." So the girl went and called the child's mother. Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give you your wages."

So the woman took the child and nursed it. When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and she took him as her son. She named him Moses, "because," she said, "I drew him out of the water."

EXODUS 1.8-2.10 ~ NRSV, alt. A. Twiddy

The Psalm

Our Help Comes From Our Connection to the Divine

- 1 If the Holy One had not been on our side, *
let Israel now say;
- 2 if the Holy One had not been on our side, when enemies rose up against us; *
then would they have swallowed us up alive in their fierce anger toward us;
- 3 Then would the waters have overwhelmed us, and the torrent gone over us; *
then would the raging waters have gone right over us.
- 4 Blessed are you, Holy One! *
- You have not given us over to be a prey for their teeth.
- 5 We have escaped like a bird from the snare of the fowler; *
the snare is broken, and we have escaped.
- 6 Our help is in the name of the Holy One, *
the maker of heaven and earth

A Second Reading: FROM THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE CHRISTIANS IN ROME

Reader: **Can you see yourself as a contributor to the greater good ~ a part of something bigger than you? A reading from Paul's letter to the Christian community in Rome.**

(pause)

¹⁻² So here's what I want you to do: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as a gift and an offering.

This kind of self-offering means that you are embracing what God is doing for you, and that is the best thing you can do.

Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking.

Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out.

Readily recognize what God wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops a well-formed maturity in you.

³ I'm speaking to you out of deep gratitude for all that God has given me, and especially as I have responsibilities in relation to you.

Living then, as every one of you does, in pure grace, it's important that you not misinterpret yourselves as people who are bringing this goodness to God. No, God brings it all to you.

The only accurate way to understand ourselves is by what God is, and by what God does for us, not by what we are and what we do for God.

⁴⁻⁶ In this way we are like the various parts of a human body. Each part gets its meaning from the body as a whole, not the other way around.

The body we're talking about is Christ's body of chosen people. Each of us finds our meaning and function as a part of that body.

But as a chopped-off finger or cut-off toe we wouldn't amount to much, would we?

So since we find ourselves fashioned into all these excellently formed and marvelously functioning parts in Christ's body, let's just go ahead and be what we were made to be, without enviously or pridefully comparing ourselves with each other, or trying to be something we aren't.

⁶⁻⁸ If you are called to preach, just preach God's Message, rather than being side-tracked to other tasks;

if you are a helper, just help, don't take over; if you teach, stick to your teaching; if you give encouraging guidance, be careful that you don't get bossy; if you're put in charge, don't manipulate; if you're called to give aid to people in distress, keep your eyes open and be quick to respond; if you work with the disadvantaged, don't let yourself get irritated with them or depressed by them. Keep a smile on your face.

⁹ To sum it all up: be genuine, and love from the centre of who you are.

(pause)

Holy Word, Holy Wisdom. Hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches.

(All: Thanks be to God)

The Gospel Reading:

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Humanity is?"

And they said, "Some say John the Baptizer, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

Jesus said to them, "But who do *you* say that I am?"

Simon Peter answered, "You are the *Anointed One*, the Son of the Living God."

And Jesus answered him, "God bless you, Simon, son of Jonah! You did not get that from a book or from a teacher! This was revealed to you by God, my Beloved, my Father.

And I tell you: you are indeed Peter, the rock. And on this rock I will build my community. Not even death itself will be able to prevent this community from growing.

I will also give you keys for opening any door and every door ~ access to govern with God's energy. No more barriers between heaven and earth.

A yes on earth ... is a yes in heaven. A no on earth ... is a no in heaven."

At that point Jesus stopped, and sternly ordered the students not to tell *anyone* that he was the Anointed One.

(pause)

...The Gospel of Christ. ... Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Matthew 16: 13-20. NRSV, alt. A. Twiddy

***The Prayer Jesus Gave Us:
in the tradition and simplicity of Clare and Francis of Assisi
~ A Franciscan Lord's Prayer ~***

Our Beloved,

**Your energy is compassionate and unique.
We want everyone to be aware of this.
We want everything to share in this.**

**Restore all things,
to be in harmony, on the outside, and on the inside.**

**Give us what we really need now,
for today, and for each day.**

**Free us from the harm we have done,
and help us, in our journey of recovery,
to release those who have harmed us.**

**Keep us safe during our times of distress,
and release us from oppression.**

**For your purpose, your strength, and your glory,
is to bring together everyone and everything.**

We are depending on this. We are committed to this.

The Process, version 1.1, Andrew Twiddy, August 2020.

This version of the prayer Jesus gave us, traditionally known as the Lord's Prayer, is similar in intention to the meditations and prayers found in the *Supplement to the Book of Alternative Services* (the grey booklet) of the Anglican Church of Canada, page 81.

To help those who may wish to cross barriers of language and culture to find a new expression for this prayer, this translation, *The Process*, operates on the principle of dynamic-equivalence, based on a search for an intersection point between an evolving world of diversity and a sympathetic reading of ancient Middle Eastern texts and context, Semitic idioms and thought forms, and the Greek text of early Christian documents, as found in the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 6, and the Gospel of Luke, chapter 11.

This version is dedicated to Franciscan communities, and offered in the tradition and simplicity of Clare and Francis of Assisi

The Process, version 1.1, an evolving process of hearing and receiving historic texts of Scripture, from the islands and inlets of the Salish Sea on the West Coast of Canada, Andrew Twiddy, CompanionSSF (Society of Saint Francis), August 2020.

Comparative information from the official readings listed on Anglican.ca

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost [Proper 21] (Green)

Sunday, August 23rd, 2020

Readings

EXODUS 1:8-2:10; PSALM 124; ROMANS 12:1-8; MATTHEW 16:13-20

Collect

Almighty God,
we are taught by your word
that all our doings without love are worth nothing.
Send your Holy Spirit and pour into our hearts
that most excellent gift of love,
the true bond of peace and of all virtue;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Additional or Alternative Collects:

I

Living God, you accept our stumbling faith, our misplaced answers, our false horizons, and through them you build a way of peace. Empower and enable us to bind the wounds of the world and loose the bonds of oppression, so that all may confess the grace that is your work alone; through Jesus Christ, your anointed one. Amen. Prayers for an Inclusive Church (2009) alt.

II

O God, with all your faithful followers of every age, we praise you, the rock of our life. Be our strong foundation and form us into the body of your Son, so that we may gladly minister to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord. Amen. Evangelical Lutheran Worship (2006) alt.

First Reading

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF EXODUS

Now a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. He said to his people, "Look, the Israelite people are more numerous and more powerful than we. Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, or they will increase and, in the event of war, join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land." Therefore they set taskmasters over them to oppress them with forced labour. They built supply cities, Pithom and Rameses, for Pharaoh. But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread, so that the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites. The Egyptians became ruthless in imposing tasks on the Israelites, and made their lives bitter with hard service in mortar and brick and in every kind of field labour. They were ruthless in all the tasks that they imposed on them.

The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, "When you act as midwives to the Hebrew women, and see them on the birthstool, if it is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, she shall live." But the midwives feared God; they did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but they let the boys live. So the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and said to them, "Why have you done this, and allowed the boys to live?" The midwives said to Pharaoh, "Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them." So God dealt well with the midwives; and the people multiplied and became very strong. And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families. Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, "Every boy that is born to the Hebrews you shall throw into the Nile, but you shall let every girl live." Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman. The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was a fine baby, she hid him three months. When she could hide him no longer she got a papyrus basket for him, and plastered it with bitumen and pitch; she put the child in it and placed it among the reeds on the bank of the river. His sister stood at a distance, to see what would happen to him. The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her attendants walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid to bring it. When she opened it, she saw the child. He was crying, and she took pity on him, "This must be one of the Hebrews' children," she said. Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and get you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?" Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Yes." So the girl went and called the child's mother. Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give you your wages." So the woman took the child and nursed it. When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and she took him as her son. She named him Moses, "because," she said, "I drew him out of the water."

EXODUS 1:8-2:10

Psalm

PSALM

REFRAIN Our help is in the name of the Lord.

If the Lord had not been on our side, let Israel now say;

if the Lord had not been on our side, when enemies rose up against us;

then would they have swallowed us up alive in their fierce anger toward us;

Then would the waters have overwhelmed us and the torrent gone over us;

then would the raging waters have gone right over us.

Blessed be the Lord! he has not given us over to be a prey for their teeth.

We have escaped like a bird from the snare of the fowler; the snare is broken, and we have escaped.

Our help is in the name of the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth. R

PSALM 124

Second Reading

A READING FROM THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE ROMANS

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will

of God - what is good and acceptable and perfect. For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgement, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

ROMANS 12:1-8

Gospel

THE HOLY GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST
ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

MATTHEW 16:13-20