

Morning Prayer and Baptism
St. Christopher by the Sea Gibson Island
Fifth Sunday of Pentecost - June 23, 2024

Welcome and Introduction

Hymn 293 – I Sing a Song of the Saints of God

Minister: Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
People: *And blessed be his Kingdom, now and for ever. Amen*

There is one Body and one Spirit;
There is one hope in God's call to us.
One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism.
One God and Father of all.

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Let us pray.

Almighty God, you have knit together your elect in one communion and fellowship in the mystical body of your Son Christ our Lord: Give us grace so to follow your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those ineffable joys that you have prepared for those who truly love you; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. *Amen.*

Lesson – Job 38:1-11

Psalm 107:1-3, 23-32

Lesson – 2 Corinthians 6:1-13

Hymn 551 – Rise up, ye saints of God

Gospel – Mark 4:35-41

Sermon – The Reverend Charles Rowins

The Presentation

Minister: The Candidate for Holy Baptism will now be presented.
Parents and Godparents *I present Hugh Bechtel to receive the Sacrament of Baptism.*

Will you be responsible for seeing that the child you present is brought up in the Christian Faith and life?
I will, with God's help.

Will you by your prayers and witness help this child to grow into the full stature of Christ?

I will, with God's help.

Do you renounce Satan and all the spiritual forces of wickedness that rebel against God?

I renounce them.

Do you renounce the evil powers of this world which corrupt and destroy the creatures of God?

I renounce them.

Do you renounce all sinful desires that draw you from the love of God?

I renounce them.

Do you turn to Jesus Christ and accept him as your Savior?

I do.

Do you put your whole trust in his grace and love?

I do.

Do you promise to follow and obey him as your Lord?

I do.

Minister: Will all of you who witness these vows do all in your power to support this person in their life in Christ?

People: *We will.*

The Baptismal Covenant

Minister: Let us join with those who are committing themselves to Christ and renew our own baptismal covenant.

Do you believe in God the Father?

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was received 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 the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

*I 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.*

Will you continue in the apostles' reaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?
I will, with God's help.

Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?
I will with God's help.

Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?
I will with God's help.

Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?
I will, with God's help.

Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?
I will, with God's help.

Prayers for the Candidate

Minister: Let us now pray for this person who is to receive the Sacrament of new birth.

Leader: Deliver him, O Lord, from the way of sin and death.

People: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Open his heart to your grace and truth.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Fill him with your holy and life-giving Spirit.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Keep him in the faith and communion of your holy Church.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Teach him to love others in the power of the Spirit.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Send him into the world in witness to our love.
Lord, hear our prayer.

Bring him to the fullness of your peace and glory.
Lord, hear our prayer.

Minister: Grant, O Lord, that all who are baptized into the death of Jesus Christ your Son may live in the power of his resurrection and look for him to come again in glory; who lives and reigns now and for ever.

People: Amen.

Thanksgiving over the Water

Minister: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give him thanks and praise.

We thank you, Almighty God, for the gift of water. Over it the Holy Spirit moved in the beginning of creation. Through it you led the children of Israel out of their bondage in Egypt into the land of promise. In it your Son Jesus received the baptism of John and was anointed by the Holy Spirit as the Messiah, the Christ, to lead us, through his death and resurrection, from the bondage of sin into everlasting life.

We thank you, Father, for the water of Baptism. In it we are buried with Christ in his death. By it we share in his resurrection. Through it we are reborn by the Holy Spirit. Therefore in joyful obedience to your Son, we bring into his fellowship those who come to him in faith, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Now sanctify this water, we pray you, by the power of your Holy Spirit, that those who here are cleansed from sin and born again may continue for ever in the risen life of Jesus Christ our Savior.

To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and for ever.
Amen.

The Baptism

Minister: I baptize you in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

People: *Amen.*

Minister: Heavenly Father, we thank you that by water and the Holy Spirit you have bestowed upon this your servant the forgiveness of sin, and have raised him to the new life of grace. Sustain him, O Lord, in your Holy Spirit. Give him an inquiring and discerning heart, the courage to will and to persevere, a spirit to know and to love you, and the gift of joy and wonder in all your works.
Amen.

You are sealed by the Holy Spirit in Baptism and marked as Christ's own for ever. *Amen.*

Let us all welcome the newly baptized.

We receive you into the household of God. Confess the faith of Christ crucified, proclaim his resurrection, and share with us in his eternal priesthood.

Announcements and America

*My country tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing.
land where my fathers died, land of the pilgrims' pride,
from every mountain side let freedom ring.*

Prayer for the Mission of the Church

Everliving God, whose will it is that all should come to you through your Son Jesus Christ: Inspire our witness to him, that all may know the power of his forgiveness and the hope of his resurrection; who lives and reigns with you and Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Hymn 497 –How bright appears the Morning Star

Dismissal Alleluia! Alleluia! Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!

Sermon preached by The Rev. Charles Rowins at St. Christopher-by-the-Sea, Gibson Island, Maryland, 5th Sunday of Pentecost, June 23, 2024.

If Jesus is who he says he – namely God’s Son - you and I would be foolish not to follow him. “Peace! Be still.” He says to the wind, and the wind obeys.

Game over. I’m following Jesus.

But, most of us haven’t had such an experience. Maybe close calls, but never at this magnitude. Yet we’re here. We are trusting that Jesus really is God’s Son. And that getting closer to Jesus really is getting closer to the Creator. Who wouldn’t want that knowledge and that relationship, if indeed it was available?

Are we being foolish? Or, are we on to something? Or, perhaps, is Jesus on to us?

Mind you, he doesn’t jump on us. Rather he intrigues us by doing miraculous things. He invites us to learn more. And, as we learn more, the Risen Christ gets under our skin and in our hearts and in our minds.

And eventually we say either “We want more” or “Leave me alone.” Our presence today suggests that we here are on the “we want more” side.

Now, there is another belief hurdle. What if we don’t get “more.” What if what we thought was a promise on God’s part continues to be a mystery? In other words, we didn’t experience the “more.” We haven’t seen the Storm stopped. The waves are still high.

Yet, here we are. We continue to want more. We are intrigued. We are hopeful. We really are thankful, though we’re not sure what we’re thankful for, other than the intrigue, the possibility, that God not only exists, but loves us, to the point of dying for us?

But, why wouldn’t God be more definite? Or, why wouldn’t we be more insightful? If God wants us to believe, then please give us more than “Ocean, be still!”

Well, God has given us more. We are the highlight of the Created Order. We can think, we can explore, we can apply, we can do all sorts of wonderful things.

Thanks to whom? Well, perhaps to God. Which explains our curiosity. Yes, we want more.

Which takes us to Jesus. Jesus wasn't a factor in the beginning, at the Creation. No, he came later. In the beginning, God put us in charge of caring for the Creation. This is what he might have said: Maybe if I, God, give them (you and me) a job, they won't keep asking if I really exist. They'll be so busy taking care of things that they won't have time to question things.

Well, that clearly did not end as God might have expected. We are trying to take care of things, but we didn't stop wondering about the beginning of things and the end of things and everything in between.

So, where are we? Well, we're still curious. We're still mindful. We're still hopeful. We still appreciate all the miracles and all the blessings and all the second chances, and just enough "I am with you right this moment" to keep our hopes alive.

And a big part of these hopes is the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus. He was, he is, he will be, the fulfillment of God's promise to us to clarify things. Let's face it, we can't handle these huge questions without some guidance, some help, maybe even a Savior.

That's the appeal, isn't it. Jesus as Savior. Not just an interesting character. Not just an impressive intellect. Not just a brave person who invites death as a message of salvation to others.

No, Jesus is more than that. He is all those things, to be sure, but he is more. Maybe even God Incarnate.

That's it, isn't it? When we look at him, when we review his life and death and new life, we just might be looking at the Creator of the Universe. We are in touch with God.

Or rather, God is in touch with us. Things we could not comprehend suddenly make sense. We feel more enlightened. We feel more hopeful. We feel more confident. The One responsible for all that has been and is and will be is not only a Creator, but a Savior.

Wow! That's worth a big thank-you, isn't it? Yes, it is. And we're here to give that thanks.

And when we do so, when we say "Thank you, Lord," we feel better than simply taking whatever comes from whomever. Life and death can be overwhelming without some sense of purpose to it all.

Well, in Christ we find that purpose. That's the appeal, isn't it? If we didn't feel special in God's eyes, you and I wouldn't be here. Who needs anonymity? Who needs constant wandering and constant wondering. No, we seek a purpose for ourselves and others. We want some clarity. We want a Savior. We need a Savior.

When we reach out, we want someone to take our hand and welcome us. Right at this point, there are options. All sorts of people are only too happy to extend a hand. Jesus is one of those options. And, for you and me, he is the most reliable, the most creative, the most patient, the most fulfilling, the most forgiving, the most comprehensive. And - this is key – the most satisfying.

We feel at home with the Lord. He understands us. He challenges us. He forgives us. He assures us that our lives are purposeful. We are not unimportant in the scheme of things. He goes to an extreme – can you say crucifixion – to assure us that we are special in God's eyes – can you say resurrection.

Now, all of this wrestling with the meaning of life is something we can do on our own. But we can also do it in the company of other seekers of insight, seekers of understanding, seekers of hope and confidence.

Welcome to St. Christopher by the Sea. We are an outpost of **seeking**. Not the only outpost, but a really special one. An outpost that begins its second century of service. And what is that service? It is an offering of a first century carpenter who just might be God Incarnate. Wow! Special indeed. Amen.

Lessons for 5th Sunday of Pentecost – June 23, 2024

Collect: O Lord, make us have perpetual love and reverence for your holy Name, for you never fail to help and govern those whom you have set upon the sure foundation of your loving-kindness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

First Reading – Job 38:1-11

The Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind: “Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?” Gird up your loins like a man, I will question you, and you shall declare to me. Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements – surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? On what were its bases sunk, or who laid its cornerstone when the morning stars sang together and all the heavenly beings shouted for joy? Or who shut in the sea with doors when it burst out from the womb? - when I made the clouds its garment and thick darkness its swaddling band, and prescribed bounds for it, and set bars and doors, and said, “Thus far shall you come, but no farther, and here shall your proud waves be stopped’?”

The Word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

Psalm 107:1-3, 23-22

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,
and his mercy endures for ever.

Let all those whom the Lord has redeemed proclaim
that he redeemed them from the hand of the foe.

He gathered them out of the lands;
from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.

Some went down to the sea in ships
and plied their trade in deep waters;

They behold the works of the Lord
and his wonders in the deep.

Then he spoke, and a stormy wind arose,
which tossed high the waves of the sea.

They mounted up to the heavens and fell back to the depths;

their hearts melted because of their peril.

They reeled and staggered like drunkards

and were at their wits' end.

Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble,

and he delivered them from their distress.

He stilled the storm to a whisper

and quieted the waves of the sea.

Then were they glad because of the calm,

and he brought them to the harbor they were bound for.

Let them give thanks to the Lord for his mercy

and the wonders he does for his children.

Let them exalt him in the congregation of the people

and praise him in the council of the elders.

Second Reading: 2 Corinthians 6:1-13

As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. For he says, "At an acceptable time I have listened to you, and on a day of salvation I have helped you." See, now is the acceptable time; look now is the day of salvation! We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying and see – we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything. We have spoken frankly to you Corinthians; our heart is wide open to you. There is no restriction in our affections, but only in yours. In return – I speak as to children – open wide your hearts also.

The Word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

Gospel: Mark 4:35-41

On that day, when evening had come, Jesus said to them, "Let us go across to the other side." And leaving the crowd behind they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" He woke up; and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?" And they were filled with great awe and said to one another "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

The Gospel of the Lord. *Praise be to thee, O Christ.*