

Sixth Sunday of Easter, May 9 Rogation Sunday

The Collect: O God, you have prepared for those who love you such good things as surpass our understanding: Pour into our hearts such love towards you, that we, loving you in all things and above all things, may obtain your promises, which exceed all that we can desire; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

First Lesson: Acts 10:44-48, read from the Amplified Bible

44 While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word. 45 The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles, 46 for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter said, 47 'Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?' 48 So he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they invited him to stay for several days.

Hear what the spirit is saying to God's people

Psalm 98, read from The Episcopal Church Book of Common Prayer

1 Sing to the Lord a new song, *

for he has done marvelous things.

2 With his right hand and his holy arm *

has he won for himself the victory.

3 The Lord has made known his victory; *

his righteousness has he openly shown in the sight of the nations.

4 He remembers his mercy and faithfulness to the house of Israel, *

and all the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God.

5 Shout with joy to the Lord, all you lands; *

lift up your voice, rejoice, and sing.

6 Sing to the Lord with the harp, *

with the harp and the voice of song.

7 With trumpets and the sound of the horn *
shout with joy before the King, the Lord.
8 Let the sea make a noise and all that is in it, *
the lands and those who dwell therein.
9 Let the rivers clap their hands, *
and let the hills ring out with joy before the Lord,
when he comes to judge the earth.
10 In righteousness shall he judge the world *
and the peoples with equity.

Epistle: 1 John 5:1-6 read from the Christian Standard Bible

5 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father also loves the one born of him. 2 This is how we know that we love God's children: when we love God and obey his commands. 3 For this is what love for God is: to keep his commands. And his commands are not a burden, 4 because everyone who has been born of God conquers the world. This is the victory that has conquered the world: our faith.

5 Who is the one who conquers the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? 6 Jesus Christ—he is the one who came by water and blood, not by water only, but by water and by blood. And the Spirit is the one who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth.

Hear what the spirit is saying to God's people

Gospel: John 15:9-17 read from the Douay-Rheims Bible

9 As the Father hath loved me, I also have loved you. Abide in my love.
10 If you keep my commandments, you shall abide in my love; as I also have kept my Father's commandments, and do abide in his love.
11 These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and your joy may be filled.
12 This is my commandment, that you love one another, as I have loved you.
13 Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

14 You are my friends, if you do the things that I command you.

15 I will not now call you servants: for the servant knoweth not what his lord doth. But I have called you friends: because all things whatsoever I have heard of my Father, I have made known to you.

16 You have not chosen me: but I have chosen you; and have appointed you, that you should go, and should bring forth fruit; and your fruit should remain: that whatsoever you shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

17 These things I command you, that you love one another.

The Gospel of the Lord

Closing Prayer: on May 10 we celebrate the life of Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf Prophetic Witness. Read from *A Great Cloud of Witnesses*.

Nicolaus von Zinzendorf was a Count of the Holy Roman Empire who always had more interest in religious matters than in affairs of court. Following studies at the pietist center of Halle, he developed his own “theology of the heart,” which placed great emphasis on a close personal relationship with the suffering Savior. This “heart religion” was not just inner emotion, however, but was to result in a life totally devoted to the Savior. “All of life becomes a liturgy,” said Zinzendorf, and even the most mundane task can be an act of worship.

Always a champion of the underdog, he granted asylum to Bohemian Protestant exiles. Following a unifying experience on August 13, 1727, in their settlement of Herrnhut on his estate, the old church of the Unitas Fratrum (Bohemian Brethren) was reborn and developed a rich liturgical and devotional life. This Moravian Church, as it came to be called, launched pioneer mission work, first in the Caribbean and then around the world. Zinzendorf himself became a bishop, and devoted his personal fortune to furthering the work of the church.

He was an early advocate of ecumenism, and, in America, he attempted to bring Protestant denominations together in the “Pennsylvania Synods.” He was not a systematic theologian, but produced numerous theological writings, widely read in Germany. In addition to these, he was a prolific hymn writer, and many of his hymn texts remain in use today in the

Moravian Church and beyond. His view of the church is summed up in his stanza:

Christian hearts, in love united,
seek alone in Jesus rest;
has he not your love excited?
Then let love inspire each breast.
Members on our Head depending,
lights reflecting him, our Sun,
brethren—his commands attending,
we in him, our Lord, are one.

(Moravian Book of Worship 1995, 673)

Let us pray: God of new life in Christ: We remember the bold witness of your servant Nicolaus von Zinzendorf, through whom your Spirit moved to draw many to faith and conversion of life. We pray that we, like him, may rejoice to sing your praise; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**