

**Holy Communion**  
**21<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Pentecost, October 17, 2021**

**Ministry of the Word**

**Hymn 665, stanzas 1-3** *All my hope in God is founded*

Acclamation BCP, page 355

Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit  
*And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever.*

Collect for Purity BCP, page 355

Glory to God in the Highest (S280) BCP, page 356

Collect for Pentecost 21 Insert

First Reading: Isaiah 53:4-12 Insert

Psalm 91:9-16 Insert

Second Reading: Hebrews 5:1-10 Insert

**Hymn 321, stanzas 1-4** *My God, thy table now is spread*

Gospel: Mark 10:35-45 Insert

The Holy Gospel according to Mark  
*Glory to you, Lord Christ.*

.....  
The Gospel of the Lord.  
*Praise to you, Lord Christ.*

Sermon The Rev. Charles Rowins

Nicene Creed BCP, page 358

Prayers of the People, Form III BCP, page 387

Confession and Absolution BCP, page 360

The Peace

The Peace of the Lord be always with you.  
*And also with you.*

Announcements and Recognition of special occasions



## Hymns for 21<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Pentecost – October 17, 2021

### Hymn 665, stanzas 1-3

### All my hope on God is founded

All my hope on God is founded; he doth still my trust renew,  
me through change and chance he guideth, only good and only true.  
God unknown, he alone calls my heart to be his own.

Mortal pride and earthly glory, sword and crown betray our trust;  
though with care and toil we build them, towers and temple fall to dust.  
But God's power, hour by hour, is my temple and my tower.

God's great goodness e'er endureth, deep his wisdom passing thought:  
splendor, light, and life attend him, beauty springeth out of nought.  
Ever more from his store newborn worlds rise and adore.

### Hymn 321, stanzas 1-4

### My God, thy table now is spread

My God, thy table now is spread, thy cup with love doth overflow;  
be all thy children thither led, and let them thy sweet mercies know.

O let thy table honored be, and furnished well with joyful guests;  
and may each should salvation see, that here its sacred pledges tastes.

Drawn by thy quickening grace, O Lord, in countless numbers let them come  
and gather from their Father's board the Bread that lives beyond the tomb.

Nor let thy spreading gospel rest till through the world thy truth has run,  
till with this Bread shall all be blessed who see the light or feel the sun.

**Hymn 336, stanzas 1-3**

**Come with us, O blessed Jesus**

Come with us, O blessed Jesus, with us evermore to be;  
and though leaving now thine altar, let us nevermore leave thee.  
Be thou one with us for ever, in our life thy love divine  
our own flesh and blood has taken, and to us thou givest thine.

Come with us, O mighty Savior, God from God, and Light from Light;  
thou art God, thy glory veiling, so that we may bear the sight.  
Now we go to seek and serve thee, through our work as through our prayers,  
grant us light to see and know thee, in thy people everywhere.

Come with us, O King of glory, by angelic voices praises;  
in our hearts as in thy heaven, be enraptured anthems raised.  
Let the mighty chorus ever sing its glad exultant songs;  
let its hymn be heard for ever peace for which creation longs.

**Sermon preached by The Rev. Charles Rowins at St. Christopher-by-the-Sea, Gibson Island, Maryland, 21<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Pentecost, October 17, 2021.**

I have a very important announcement today. Actually it's a repeat of a very important announcement. And it's designed for you and me. You and I individually, and you and I collectively. This announcement is not about others. It's about you, and it's about me, and it's about all, who in the words of this morning's Collect, "persevere with steadfast faith."

Our lessons today are not about others. This is not an introductory session, maybe with application to us. No, these lessons are about **us**. And they are designed to remind **us** that at the heart of **our** faith is **our** decision, individual and corporate, to persevere as the recipients of God's love in Christ and as the spokespeople for that very special love.

Now, there are some who would not describe themselves as "recipients of God's love." **Interested** in that love? Yes. **Moved** by that love? Yes, sometimes. **Devoted** to that love? Maybe not "devoted," but **inclined** certainly. Whatever category we think we're in, we're **here** right now, aren't we?

Yes, we're here. And some Sundays the lessons reinforce our interest, our speculation, our "maybe." They invite us to "consider" steadfast faith as an option.

But there are other Sundays when we feel as if we have reported for duty and are awaiting our instructions. On these Sundays, we are not in the "**maybe**" mood, but the "**Yes, Sir**" mood. What are our "marching orders? Let's get to it!"

It's not a question of whether **we have** marching orders. It's a question of whether **we honor** those orders. Today's Psalm (**Psalm 19**) assumes that we will honor them. After all, we asked for those orders. Verse 9: "Because you have made the Lord your refuge .... there shall no evil happen to you." It was your choice, our choice, to be on board, and now it is your choice, our choice, to honor that decision. God has promised to honor it. Have you? Have we?

Today's Letter to Hebrews (**Hebrews 5:1-10**) was written to assure Jews, as they wrestled with whether to follow Jesus or not, that God Himself was vested in their decision. "And one does not presume to claim this honor, but claim it only when

called by God.” In other words, the fact that you/we are considering this allegiance to Jesus is not an accident. You/we have been chosen.

Now, consider your own/our own, response to Jesus. There are no doubt different levels of commitments. Some of us believe we have been called and therefore need to respond with “Yes, Sir.” Some of us believe that we might have been called, but that no response is necessary right away. And still others believe that this whole notion of being called is more than we bargained for.

Fair enough. Ambivalence has always been part of religious faith. Today’s lesson from Mark is an example (**Mark 10:35-45**). James and John want Jesus to respond. “Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.” In other words, “Before we respond to your invitation, we have some conditions.” Well, this approach didn’t sit well with Jesus. “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?”

Still missing the point, James and John boldly respond “We are able.” To which, Jesus replies “It is not so among you.” Jesus then goes on to tell James and John that they must be a “servant to all and ransom for many.”

Well, as we know, James and John subsequently accepted this condition. They grew in their understanding of the “cost of discipleship.” One of Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s most important works uses this phrase as a book title. Not just theory, but action, commitment, sacrifice, “Yes, Sir!”

Think of a continuum of response to Jesus. You are I are somewhere along that continuum. We’re at different points in our belief and therefore in our commitment. It’s a journey. Not always easy, but essential, as far as Jesus is concerned. Framing decisions is one thing. Making those decisions is another thing. Our lessons today are geared to the “making,” not just the “framing.” Geared to “steadfast faith,” not just “I wonder what it’s all about.”

There’s nothing wrong with the latter. We were there. Maybe we’re still there. Maybe “steadfast” presumes too much. Maybe we’re not ready for “Yes, Sir.” Maybe it’s a stretch at this point in our faith development. And, you know what? That’s just fine with Jesus. He had been there as well.

And, if we feel as if we are beyond that point right now, that “Yes, Sir” is our response now, something might happen to change that response. What today’s Psalm calls “dashing your foot against a stone.”

And when that happens, what do we instinctively do? We go back to the God from whom we just retreated. “Help me, Lord, in my unbelief.”

Think about it. As we are losing our faith, we are reaching out in faith. And often with success. From today’s passage from Isaiah: “Out of his anguish he shall see light.” Out of anguish – whenever and however that anguish appears - some things become more clear, not less clear.

The Lesson from Hebrews makes the same point: “Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.”

So, where are we today? Are we in the “Yes, Sir” category or the “Maybe category”? Our lessons today seem to be designed for the “Yes, Sir” category. But they certainly don’t preclude the “Maybe” category. In truth be told, we live in both worlds, don’t we?

And that’s probably a good thing, especially if, at any given point, there are some of us in each category. What do we call such a combination? It’s called a congregation. It’s called a family. It’s called a nation. It’s called an Island. It’s called a Faith. Different gifts from different people pointing to a common, capital S, Source.

For you and me in this place, in this Faith, the capital S Source is more than source. It is Destiny, with a great adventure in between. “As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be.” That’s our motto. That’s our Faith. That’s our bond – with one another and with the Lord.

Today’s **Collect** notes the roles of each party. First, the role of God: “Preserve the works of your mercy.” In other words, “Stay with us, Lord, don’t leave us.” And then, our role: “That your Church throughout the world may persevere with steadfast faith in the confession of your Name.” We have a job. At a minimum, that job is to acknowledge the possibility – the “Maybe” response, and, at a maximum, to respond to the Lord with “Yes, Sir!” Or, as we frequently say, “Amen.”



## Lessons for 21<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Pentecost – October 17, 2021

**Collect:** Almighty and everlasting God, in Christ you have revealed your glory among the nations: Preserve the works of your mercy, that your Church throughout the world may persevere with steadfast faith in the confession of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

### **First Reading: Isaiah 53:4-12**

Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. By a perversion of justice he was taken away. Who could have imagined his future? For he was cut off from the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people. They made his grave with the wicked and his tomb with the rich, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth. Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him with pain. When you make his life an offering for sin, he shall see his offspring, and shall prolong his days; through him the will of the Lord shall prosper. Out of his anguish he shall see light; he shall find satisfaction through his knowledge. The righteous one, my servant, shall make many righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore I will allot him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he poured out himself to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

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

## **Psalm 91:9-16**

Because you have made the Lord your refuge  
*and the Most High your habitation,*  
There shall no evil happen to you,  
*neither shall any plague come near your dwelling.*  
For he shall give his angels charge over you,  
*to keep you in all your ways.*  
They shall bear you in their hands,  
lest you dash our foot against a stone.  
You shall tread upon the lion and adder;  
*you shall trample the young lion and the serpent under your feet.*  
Because he is bound to me in love, therefore will I deliver him;  
*I will protect him, because he knows my Name.*  
He shall call upon me, and I will answer him;  
*I am with him in trouble; I will rescue him and bring him to honor.*  
With long life will I satisfy him,  
*and show him my salvation.*

## **Second Reading: Hebrews 5:1-10**

Every high priest chosen from among mortals is put in charge of things pertaining to God on their behalf, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He is able to deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is subject to weakness; and because of this he must offer sacrifice for his own sins as well as for those of the people. And one does not presume to take this honor, but takes it only when called by God, just as Aaron was. So also Christ did not glorify himself in becoming a high priest, but was appointed by the one who said to him, "You are my son, today I have begotten you"; as he says also in another place, "You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek." In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him, having been designated by God a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

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

## **Gospel: Mark 10:35-45**

James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to him and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." And he said to them, "What is it you want me to do for you?" And they said to him, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory." But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They replied, "We are able." Then Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared." When the ten heard this, they began to be angry with James and John. So Jesus called them and said to them, "You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. For the son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many."

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