



SAINT ANDREW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

306 N. Division Street, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104 • (734) 663-0518 • www.standrewsaa.org

Sunday, August 30, 2020

Morning Prayer • Proper 17

Watch this service on YouTube

Sunday, August 30
at 10:00 am

SERVICE LINK:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCkK2En-nuhP_EECpxvvjO_zw

Then join us for Coffee Hour on Zoom!

Sunday, August 30
at 10:45 am

Log-in information for this Zoom meeting can be found in the Saturday 'Service Links' email or you can send an email to Fr. Alan: agibson@standrewsaa.org.

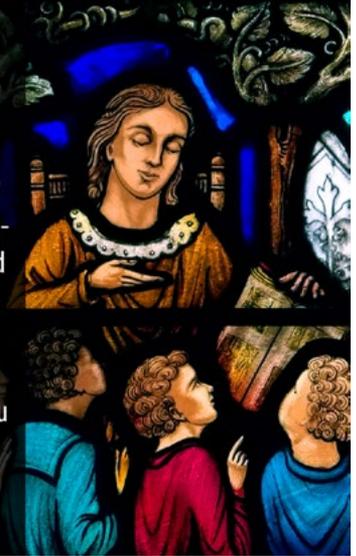
We look forward to seeing you online!

 standrewsaa.org

 [@standrewsaa](https://www.instagram.com/standrewsaa)

 St. Andrew's YouTube Channel

O Eternal God,
bless all schools,
colleges, and
universities,
that they may be lively
centers for sound learn-
ing, new discovery, and
the pursuit of wisdom;
and grant that those
who teach and those
who learn may find you
to be the source of all
truth; through Jesus
Christ our Lord. *Amen.*



Dear friends:

With some trepidation I've been watching students moving in downtown and in the neighborhood around the church. In addition to feeling my age (as I increasingly do this time of year) and worrying about a potential rise in Covid cases, I am also reminded of what it was like to be eighteen and, even with a university safety net to support me, of being "on my own" for the first time. It was an exciting time that I deeply value but have no desire to relive. I watch these young people and wonder what they make of the world and nation in which they live. They have not known a United States that was not at war. They have only known a society that is deeply divided by systemic racism, economic disparity, and strident political differences. They have been formed by technology that is constantly changing that will leave many of those who cannot keep up, behind. And now, they have the Covid-19 pandemic to navigate.

If I sound like a pessimistic old man, that may partially be true. In fact, I think I'm probably more worried than anything else. Worried that the problems and challenges of the world will rob these young people

of some of the joy I was fortunate enough to experience when I was their age. While it wasn't always easy, I enjoyed those years and I hope they do, too.

So, where do we find hope? It's a lot closer than we might think. Earlier this month I had the pleasure of baptizing a baby for a couple whose wedding I performed two years ago. Even masked, they were as proud and happy as any other young parents and little Leo seemed to have a grand time. Last week, I celebrated the wedding of a young woman who grew up at St. Andrew's, whom I have known since she was twelve years old. She was as beautiful and radiant a bride as I've ever seen and her now husband was as disarmingly nervous as any groom I've ever known. Even when life is really tough, life goes on and thrives.

As this school year begins in new and odd ways, as families continue to form, as we adapt our rituals to the new realities under which we operate we must also continue to address the old struggles that limit the lives of so many people. The pandemic has our attention right now. One day, it won't. That will be a joyous day. But unless we are ready to face the injustices that we have created as much through our inactions as our intents, that joy will be hollow for young and old, alike. If we want to thrive, then our neighbor will have to be given the same opportunity. Let us not only hope, but be ready to act to see that they do.

God bless, *Fr. Alan*



Announcements

Bible Study resumes Thursday, September 10

The Thursday morning weekly Bible Study resumes on Zoom on Thursday, September 10 at 10:00 am.

Can't attend every week?

That's ok! Drop-ins are welcome.

Never Zoomed before?

No problem, we can teach you how!

Don't have a computer?

You can participate by calling in to the group on your phone.

If you would like to join the Bible Study, please send an email to Fr. Alan (agibson@standrewsaa.org) or call him at 734-663-0518, ext. 201 for the meeting link or phone number.

Navigating this Service

A "full text" pdf of St. Andrew's Morning Prayer is available [HERE](#) or you can follow along with the service using the Book of Common Prayer, starting with page 75.

Prelude: *Etude de Sonorité*

Jehan Alain (1911-1940)

Opening Hymn: *God is Love*

Hymnal, no. 379

1 God is Love, let heaven a - dore him; God is Love, let
 2 God is Love; and Love en - folds us, all the world in
 3 God is Love; and though with blind - ness sin af - flicts all

earth re - joice; let cre - a - tion sing be - fore him
 one em - brace: with un - fail - ing grasp God holds us,
 hu - man life, God's e - ter - nal lov - ing - kind - ness

and ex - alt him with one voice. God who laid the earth's foun -
 ev - ery child of ev - ery race. And when hu - man hearts are
 guides us through our earth - ly strife. Sin and death and hell shall

da - tion, God who spread the heaven a - bove, God who breathes through
 break - ing un - der sor - row's i - ron rod, then we find that
 nev - er o'er us fi - nal tri - umph gain; God is Love, so

all cre - a - tion: God is Love, e - ter - nal Love.
 self - same ach - ing deep with - in the heart of God.
 Love for ev - er o'er the u - ni - verse must reign.

Opening Sentences	Book of Common Prayer, pg. 78
Confession	Book of Common Prayer, pg. 79
Preces	Hymnal, no. S-33 Book of Common Prayer, pg. 80
Invitatory	Book of Common Prayer, pg. 80
Venite	Hymnal, no. S-34 Book of Common Prayer, pg. 82

Psalm 26:1-8

- 1 Give judgment for me, O LORD,
for I have lived with integrity; *
I have trusted in the Lord and have not faltered.
- 2 Test me, O LORD, and try me; *
examine my heart and my mind.
- 3 For your love is before my eyes; *
I have walked faithfully with you.
- 4 I have not sat with the worthless, *
nor do I consort with the deceitful.
- 5 I have hated the company of evildoers; *
I will not sit down with the wicked.
- 6 I will wash my hands in innocence, O LORD, *
that I may go in procession round your altar,
- 7 Singing aloud a song of thanksgiving *
and recounting all your wonderful deeds.
- 8 LORD, I love the house in which you dwell *
and the place where your glory abides.

Old Testament: Jeremiah 15:15-21

O Lord, you know; remember me and visit me, and bring down retribution for me on my persecutors. In your forbearance do not take me away; know that on your account I suffer insult. Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart; for I am called by your name, O Lord, God of hosts. I did not sit in the company of merry-makers, nor did I rejoice; under the weight of your hand I sat alone, for you had filled me with indignation. Why is my pain

unceasing, my wound incurable, refusing to be healed? Truly, you are to me like a deceitful brook, like waters that fail. Therefore thus says the Lord: If you turn back, I will take you back, and you shall stand before me. If you utter what is precious, and not what is worthless, you shall serve as my mouth. It is they who will turn to you, not you who will turn to them. And I will make you to this people a fortified wall of bronze; they will fight against you, but they shall not prevail over you, for I am with you to save you and deliver you, says the Lord. I will deliver you out of the hand of the wicked, and redeem you from the grasp of the ruthless.

Canticle: *A Song of Creation*

Hymnal, no. S-228

Book of Common Prayer, pg. 88

The Gospel: Matthew 16:21-28

Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you.” But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.”

Then Jesus told his disciples, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life?

“For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay everyone for what has been done. Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”

Sermon

Fr. Alan Gibson

In the Name of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

How quickly things can change. Last week we saw Peter proclaiming Jesus as the Messiah, which, up to this point in Matthew’s gospel, is a high-water mark. Today, that scene continues with a shocking change of direction as Jesus shares with his disciples what lies ahead: Jerusalem, rejection, arrest, execution. Peter, again, is the first to react, “God forbid it,” he says, “this must never happen to you.” The leap of faith Peter previously took now leads him to hit a brick wall. There is no allowance for this new,

grim reality. Such horrible things couldn't possibly happen to his teacher and Lord.

Well, why not? Why is it so unthinkable? Why should Jesus be exempt from pain and suffering, humiliation, and death? Well, because if all of that can happen to the Son of God, then it can happen to me. It was just too much for Peter. His new-found faith couldn't take it. It's too much for anyone to be confronted with the reality that their worst fears can come true.

Peter wasn't the only one who was afraid. Jesus shared the same fear. But before it got control of him, Jesus met Peter's strong protest with an even stronger rebuke. "Get behind me, Satan!" are the harshest words that ever came out of Jesus' mouth. No one else, not even Judas, who would betray him, is dealt with so severely. But this isn't simply Jesus losing his cool. This outburst reveals how tempted Jesus was, how fearful his fate was to him. If Jesus wasn't exempt from death, why would he be immune to fear? In this very human moment Jesus challenges us to see that death is not the complete picture, nor is it the end of the story. There is more, but we have to get beyond our fears to see it.

How much living do we miss because of fear? How much time is wasted worrying about something that hasn't or might never happen? How many people, or groups of people, do we shut out because of perceived differences that we've never bothered to understand or overcome? Rarely, do we walk around giddy with glee because of the joy and happiness that might befall us. Rarely, do we enthusiastically move out of our comfort zone. Disaster is much easier to visualize, and the prospect of it is easy to sell. Knowing that, Jesus uses a bit of shock therapy to get us to look at things for what they are.

"If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me." The cross in Jesus' day was not a religious symbol. It was a state-sanctioned instrument of brutal capital punishment. To intimidate a conquered people, the Romans set up crosses in places with high volumes of traffic, such as along major roadways, like the one Jesus and his disciples walked as this discussion took place. There, enemies of the State would be executed, along with anyone else the authorities chose to eliminate. (Calvary Hill, outside Jerusalem, was just such a spot.) The effect was chilling. It would be like having a firing squad stationed at the corner of Stadium and Main. (Visualize that the next time you pass the football stadium). The cross was not a symbol for anything, it was a tool used to instill terror.

In picking up his own cross, Jesus shows us that death is not what we should fear. What truly threatens us is the power that keeps us from living the life God has given us. If we allow ourselves to live in fear, then we will not have lived at all. Devoting all our energy to ensuring our security is the best way to become vulnerable. If we constantly seek to avoid what frightens us, then whatever that is becomes our master and our god. When we stand up to such power, then we truly begin to live. Fear can't control us, unless we let it.

Responding to Jesus' call to follow him is an invitation to break free from the masters that seek to enslave our souls. Jesus didn't say, go out and search for your cross. He said, pick it up; you know what it is. It's right in front of you. Until we get a hold on it, it will be a barrier to living. But if we claim the power that Christ offers, and pick up our cross and follow him as he carries his, nothing can stand in our way.

Does this seem like more than we bargained for? Of course it does, because there's still another piece to the picture we need to see. It's what fear wants to keep us from seeing, as it kept Peter from hearing: Jesus' promise of resurrection and a new life with him. That's not easy to see when something else blocks our view.

The only way anyone, including Jesus, could ever pick up their cross and look in the eye of the power that fear holds, is by seeing something beyond it. That vision of something stronger than our greatest fear is what Jesus gives us. If we're ever going to recognize Jesus as the Messiah, it will be because faith shows us that life is what we see beyond all our fears. When we can see that, we will find not only more than we bargained for, but more than we even dreamed.

Apostles Creed

Book of Common Prayer, pg. 96

The Prayers

Collect of the Day

Lord of all power and might, the author and giver of all good things: Graft in our hearts the love of your Name; increase in us true religion; nourish us with all goodness; and bring forth in us the fruit of good works; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Voluntary: *Promenade*

Timothy Johnson (b. 1957)

Oliver Barron, Trumpet

Prayer of St. Chrysostom

Concluding Versicle

Hymnal, no. S-54

Closing Hymn: *Take Up Your Cross*

Hymnal, no. 675



1 Take up your cross, the Sa - vior said, if
 2 Take up your cross, let not its weight fill
 3 Take up your cross, heed not the shame, and
 4 Take up your cross, then, in his strength, and
 5 Take up your cross, and fol - low Christ, nor



1 you would my dis - ci - ple be; take up your cross with
 2 your weak spi - rit with a - larm; his strength shall bear your
 3 let your fool - ish heart be still; the Lord for you ac -
 4 calm - ly ev - ery dan - ger brave; it guides you to a -
 5 think till death to lay it down; for on - ly those who



1 will - ing heart, and hum - bly fol - low af - ter me.
 2 spi - rit up, and brace your heart, and nerve your arm.
 3 cept - ed death up - on a cross, on Cal - vary's hill.
 4 bun - dant life and leads to vic - to - ry o'er the grave.
 5 bear the cross may hope to wear the glo - rious crown.

Postlude: *Flutes*

Jean Langlais (1907-1991)

New Issue Available

CLICK TO READ

The Network

The newsletter for Saint Andrew's Episcopal Church

SEPTEMBER 2020

