



Forks and Friends group will be providing packaged meals EVERY THURSDAY EVENING between 5 and 6 PM until further notice. Meals may be picked up at the East door (parking lot) of the Anamosa United Methodist Church.

Jones County Food Bank: To donate money, checks should be written to Jones County Community Food Bank and mailed to 105 Broadway Place, Anamosa IA 52205. Checks written to HACAP cannot be donated to the food bank! Julie Finn at HACAP is the only one working at this time. **They are in need of peanut butter, cereal or canned soup at this time.**

Wayne Zion has a page with Jones County Food Banks. <https://waynezion.org/>

Apostolic Assembly Church, food pickup times: Every 2nd and 4th Saturday 10AM-12PM Drive in, tell them number in your household, they will put bag in your vehicle.

Camperships are still available. Please email CYFM if you have any further questions or to inquire about a Campership for your child.



The 2020 Census data touches everything, impacting funds for education, health care, food programs, our representation in Congress and more.

- It's quick and easy. The 2020 Census questionnaire will take about 10 minutes to complete.
- It's safe, secure, and confidential. Your information and privacy are protected.
- If you need help filling out your census online please contact a family member with a computer to guide you through it.
- <https://my2020census.gov/> or call 884-330-2020. #2020Census

If you have any questions you can call me and I will help direct you to the information you need. Lois O

Prayer Concerns: For Martina Danielson and for all facing issues from the corona virus: sickness or social isolation. (send prayer requests to stpaulanamosa@gmail.com; include your name, prayer recipient name, and family relationship)

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Please call us if we can be of assistance to you. PLEASE leave a message if we cannot answer and we will return your call ASAP. We may be separated, BUT we are not alone!

If you have computer or electronic access but are not sure how to find the St. Paul services, communications or Zoom meetings, please call Lois who will help guide you to the proper locations or help you find the assistance you need.

Introduction: In these days between Ascension and Pentecost, we gather with the disciples in the upper room, waiting for the Spirit to transform the church around the world. In today's gospel Jesus prays for his followers and for their mission in his name. Amid religious, social, and economic divisions, we seek the unity that Jesus had with his Father. Made one in baptism, we go forth to live our faith in the world, eager for the unity that God intends for the whole human family.

First Reading: Acts of the Apostles 1:6-14
⁶Then they gathered around him and asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"
⁷He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."
⁹After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

¹⁰They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. ¹¹“Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”

¹²Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day’s walk from the city. ¹³When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. ¹⁴They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

This story immediately precedes the choosing of Matthias to replace Judas as one of the apostles. There were 120 ‘brothers’ gathered together waiting for the promised Holy Spirit including, as we hear, women and members of Jesus’s family. This was shortly after Jesus ascended to the heavens and before Pentecost {that is why we hear the story this weekend.} Since the group of disciples had grown so large, why did they feel the need to choose a twelfth apostle?

Numbers play an important symbolic role in the Scriptures and for the Jewish people. Twelve is a number which represents wholeness or completeness. There were twelve tribes in Israel {they represented all the people}, there were twelve apostles {they represented all the followers of Jesus}, there were twelve baskets of crusts picked up after the multitude of people had been fed {which represents the fullness of the outpouring}. The apostles wanted a twelfth witness to Jesus’ resurrection to show symbolically that Israel had been restored through Jesus’ Messiah-ship and that the fullness of God’s reign was now at hand. These twelve represent all the “brothers and sisters upon whom Holy Spirit would be outpoured,” including you and me.

It is worth noting that the community of believers raised up two nominees based on their presence with Jesus throughout his life and resurrection, and then they prayed and believed that the final choice was God’s. Election was done by drawing a name, not casting votes. In other words, after the discernment had been done, they let go of their own preferences and relied on divine influence. {Does this match our election process in the community of faith today?}

In this brief section, we hear a conclusive statement by Luke about the nature of the very early Christian group: they remained together in prayer, sought reconciliation, and stayed true to the request of Christ to wait in the Holy City for the promised Paraclete (one who walks along side of). Perhaps this is a template for Christian living.

A Sabbath’s Day walk was 2000 cubits (Nm. 35:5), or 0.6 mile. A cubit was about 18 inches, or the length from the elbow to the end of the index finger. The Mount of Olives was a short distance to the east of Jerusalem, across the Kidron Valley.

Second Reading: The First letter in the name of Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11 NIV

¹²Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. ¹³But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. ¹⁴If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. ⁶Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. ⁷Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

⁸Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. ⁹Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

¹⁰And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. ¹¹To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen

Because of the issues being dealt with in this letter, scholars suggest that this letter was penned very late in the first century A.D. by someone who claimed the authority of Peter. It is directed to those newly baptized members of the Christian community in Asia Minor (Turkey) who were called “resident aliens.” They were struggling with relationships in a predominantly pagan culture which viewed them as second class people, but by joining the Christian group, they had a new hope for dignity, care, and equality. Many named “Christian” were undergoing harassment and/or persecution from non-believing Jews and authorities in the Roman Empire who would have preferred the loyalty of this religious group. These groups would use the term “Christian” as an insult, similar to the way a four letter word would function today. It was disheartening to these beleaguered followers of

Jesus who thought of themselves as the “Israel of God” (Gal. 6:16) or God’s holy people (1 Pt. 2:9). As it was, the letter served as a means of encouragement so that those who suffered because of their loyalty to Jesus would know they were worshipping God with their lives by avoiding the natural desire to retaliate.

Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35 NIV

¹ May God arise, may his enemies be scattered; may his foes flee before him.

² May you blow them away like smoke—as wax melts before the fire, may the wicked perish before God.

³ But may the righteous be glad and rejoice before God; may they be happy and joyful.

⁴ Sing to God, sing in praise of his name, extol him who rides on the clouds; rejoice before him—his name is the LORD.

⁵ A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling.

⁶ God sets the lonely in families, he leads out the prisoners with singing; but the rebellious live in a sun-scorched land.

⁷ When you, God, went out before your people, when you marched through the wilderness, ⁸ the earth shook, the heavens poured down rain, before God, the One of Sinai, before God, the God of Israel.

⁹ You gave abundant showers, O God; you refreshed your weary inheritance.

¹⁰ Your people settled in it, and from your bounty, God, you provided for the poor.

³² Sing to God, you kingdoms of the earth, sing praise to the Lord,

³³ to him who rides across the highest heavens, the ancient heavens, who thunders with mighty voice.

³⁴ Proclaim the power of God, whose majesty is over Israel, whose power is in the heavens.

³⁵ You, God, are awesome in your sanctuary; the God of Israel gives power and strength to his people. Praise be to God!

Gospel: John 17:1-11 NIV

After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: “Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. ² For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. **Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.** ⁴ I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do. ⁵ And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

⁶ “I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave

them to me and they have obeyed your word. ⁷ Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. ⁸ For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me. ⁹ I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. ¹⁰ All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them. ¹¹ I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one.

As you listen to this passage from John’s gospel, picture yourself among those gathered around the table at the Last Supper. Jesus has just informed you that he will surely die in the near future. He is preparing you for his departure. He is also preparing you for a mission that will take you into “the world” where you will be asked to share the story, proclaim the Kingdom, and carry on the ministry of Jesus to the outcasts, sinners, and sick. Those who do not believe in Jesus or have faith in God’s presence will surely challenge you. Jesus prays to his father that you will remain with Him while he goes to the Father. Are you ready? Do you accept the mission?

The feelings of confusion and abandonment experienced by the followers of Jesus were most probably heightened in their experience of Jesus’ death. They acknowledged that he was no longer with them while facing an uncertain future. “Where is God now and who are we without Jesus’ physical presence? What do we do while we wait for God?” These same questions were on the lips of those who gathered regularly for Eucharist in John’s community.

This prayer from Jesus recorded in John’s gospel, and the experience of communion, anticipated their questions. In the first part of the prayer, Jesus calls upon the Father to give glory or honor to his disciples. While the religious leaders and Roman world thought his disciples fools, Jesus had in fact provided the world an authentic way to be in relationship with the Creator through a life based on limitless love. In the second part of the prayer, Jesus reflects on his own fidelity to the Father, bringing the people entrusted to him to a greater understanding of God’s Word. Lastly, Jesus prays that the Father will help his followers remain united and not to scatter after he has been taken from them. Recalling these words of Jesus reminds Christians that the best way to fulfill our mission to the world is through intimate knowledge of Jesus’ presence; this is best

experienced by gathering with fellow believers, breaking bread, and recalling the holy words Jesus offered to his own disciples. This is the pattern for the Domestic Church (home) and the Parish Church in the wider community. It would seem to make this very intriguing verse true in the present: “[John 17:3](#) Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.”

Taking it Home:

-gather together those who depend on you and pray to God for them in front of them. Note how you feel afterwards. What response did you get? Would it be helpful to do something like this regularly?

-take ten minutes with your family to identify how you love each other and then recognize God’s presence in it. (love can be saying positive things, sacrificing so others can have what they need, sharing, helping out so the family can function smoothly, speaking with respect, praying together, forgiving, making a meal and eating together, listening....)

-add a spark of red to your home or office this week in anticipation of Pentecost. Pray that you will be open to recognize Holy Spirit’s activity in your life.

-if you have a difficulty or crisis in your recent past, talk it through with someone you trust; can you now look back at it with the eyes of faith and see where God was present and new life has emerged?

-ask yourself, “Do I over-parent?” or “Do I have difficulty giving up control?” Perhaps you, like Jesus, are being asked to loosen the reigns on your children or students or employees so they can show forth their gifts and talents. How does it make you feel to consider this: anxious, curious, relieved, excited?

-All the baptized who gather around the Lord’s Table are sent into the world with an apostolic mission: bring the Good News of love and mercy. Look at the places where you spend most of your time. If you took a survey, would the people who interact with you on a regular basis be able to identify Christ-like behaviors in you?

Mindfulness (set aside five minutes. breathe and read through three times. Which words or ideas hold energy for you? What images and feelings emerge in your imagination?)

“Out yonder they may curse, revile, and torture one another, defile all the human instincts, make a shambles of creation (if it were in their power), but here, no, here, it is unthinkable, here there is abiding peace, the peace of God, and the serene security created by a handful of good neighbors living at one with the creature world.”

– [Henry Miller, *Big Sur and the Oranges of Hieronymus Bosch*](#)

“Labels bias our perceptions, thinking, and behavior. A label or story can either separate us from, or connect us to, nature. For our health and happiness, we must critically evaluate our labels and stories by their effects.”

– [Michael J. Cohen, *Reconnecting with Nature: Finding Wellness Through Rebuilding Your Bond with the Earth*](#)



If you want to be a little more intentional and traditional about the bread you use when breaking bread in your domestic church (home), try this recipe for unleavened bread.

COMMUNION BREAD RECIPE

1 1/2 cups whole wheat flour
1/2 cup white flour
1/4 tsp salt
3/4 tsp baking soda
MIX THESE TOGETHER...THEN ADD:
2 heaping tsp oil and MIX...THEN ADD:
3/4 cup cold water
3 Tbs molasses/honey (I use 1 1/2 Tbs of each)

KNEAD 2 minutes on a floured surface
DIVIDE into 3 or 4 equal parts
ROLL into 6-7" rounds (thin)
MARK with a cross

BAKE at 350* for 10-12 minutes on ungreased cookie sheet (let cool, place in baggie, freezes well)