



THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST 13 June, 2021

The mission of Jesus
was to reveal God's communion
with humanity and creation.

—Rev Dr Michael Trainor

GATHERING

Opening Sentences

I come to give thanks to God
who brought me into being
and raised me into this new day.

I seek the liberating love of Jesus
who frees me from the pain of my past
and leads me into fulness of life.

I pray for the Spirit to be with me
that my heart might be one in Christ
and my worship pleasing to God.

Opening Prayer

Holy Spirit of God and Christ:
like the wind of this changing season,
blow within and around me.
Disturb those parts of me
in need of revision and fresh perspectives.
Draw me near to you
and form me into a person of truth and grace.
Assure me of your unconditional love
so I can step into the evolving future
with courage and trust.
Amen.

ENCOUNTERING THE LIVING WORD

Scripture Reading—Mark 3:20–35

Then Jesus went home; and the crowd came together again, so that they could not even eat their bread. When Jesus' family heard it, they went out to restrain him, for people were saying, "He has gone out of his mind." And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, "He has Beelzebul, and by the ruler of the demons he casts out demons."

And Jesus called them to him, and spoke to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but his end has come. But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his property without first tying up the strong man; then indeed the house can be plundered.

"Truly I tell you, people will be forgiven for their sins and whatever blasphemies they utter; but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit can never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin"—for they had said, "He has an unclean spirit."

Then his mother and his brothers came; and standing outside, they sent to him and called him. A crowd was sitting around Jesus; and they said to him, "Your mother and your brothers and sisters are outside, asking for you." And he replied, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" And looking at those who sat around him, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother."

May your Word live in us
and bear much fruit to your glory.

Going Deeper

This Gospel can be challenging for us on many levels. Jesus indicates that God's love extends well beyond familiar connections and ordinary loyalties. Consider the people in your life right now.

- Who, if anyone, might God be inviting you to extend grace to?
- When has someone's humanness touched you, especially if the person is beyond your realm of familiarity?

Jesus' family thinks he has gone out of his mind. They are upset by his association with those who are usually not included or regarded as important.

- How does this resonate with your experience?
- Is there an invitation you hear in the Gospel for you just now?

Reflection on the Word

RESPONDING WITH OUR LIVES

Song

Words: John Bell & Graham Maule

*Inspired by love and anger, disturbed by need and pain,
informed of God's own bias, we ask God once again:
'How long must some folk suffer? How long can few folk mind?
How long dare vain self-interest turn prayer and pity blind?'*

*From those forever shackled to what their wealth can buy,
the fear of lost advantage provokes the bitter cry:
'Don't query our position! Don't criticise our wealth!
Don't mention those exploited by politics and stealth!'*

*To God, who through the prophets proclaimed a different age,
we offer earth's indifference, its agony and rage:
'When will the wronged be righted? When will the kingdom come?
When will the world be generous to all instead of some?'*

*God asks, 'Who will go for me? Who will extend my reach?
And who, when few will listen, will prophesy and preach?
And who, when few bid welcome, will offer all they know?
And who, when few dare follow, will walk the road I show?'*

*Amused in someone's kitchen, asleep in someone's boat,
attuned to what the ancients exposed, proclaimed and wrote,
a saviour without safety, a tradesman without tools
has come to tip the balance with fisherfolk and fools.*

Prayers of the People

Loving Creator: Thank you for the love you pour out on us and on the earth each day. Open our eyes to see your Spirit at work and open our hearts as we pray: **Kindle your love in us.**

Call us out beyond familiar connections and well-established routines. Reveal the healing potential of your generous embrace of everyone and everything. **Kindle your love in us.**

Renew our thirst for justice and show us how to pursue it with all our hearts. Help us to trust in your goodness and teach us to share. **Kindle your love in us.**

Move within the leaders of all nations and instil in them a desire for cooperation and the common good so together we can face a more hopeful future. **Kindle your love in us.**

Give us courage to live the foolish path of self-giving love that we might be a community of hospitality, encounter and care. **Kindle your love in us.**

Disciples' Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen

Blessing—From *Life Overflowing: 13th Assembly of the UCA*, Neryl McCullum

We are the Church:
And we choose life,
overflowing and abundant,
in all its variations of light and shade.

We are called to work for justice:
Set our feet on the journey
of justice-making,
ready to hit the road
when action against injustice is required.

We are called to compassion:
Open our arms to embrace
the suffering world
and to stand with those in need.

We are called to be bringers
of hope and joy:
Give us the courageous voices
of prophets and visionaries,
with the imagination to dream
of what might be,
not settle for what is.

We are called to love the world:
Audaciously, boldly,
overtly, publicly—so much so
that it truly makes a difference.

Come Holy Spirit, flow in and around us,
through and throughout us,
overflow and flood
into every nook and cranny of our lives.
Come Holy Spirit,
light a burning desire within us
to be the Church at its best. Amen.