

## Worship Resources - *Family Values* / [Worship 6/6/21 Family Values](#)

Pentecost 2, Year B,

6<sup>th</sup> June, 2021

**2 Corinthians 4:13—5:1 CEV / Mark 3:20-35 CEV**

### **Prelude** *When the Morning Stars Together*

text by Albert F. Bayly

played by Annie Center, used and reported under CCLI Streaming License 20261246

<https://youtu.be/kyI3Z4aTDao>

### **Call to Worship**

O Lord our God, we come together with songs of praise in our hearts,  
because of your unfailing love and faithfulness.

**Even though we struggle with life's issues, your mercy blesses us.**

Listening God, we come together with prayers of thanks in our hearts,  
because you hear and answer our prayers.

**Even though life is sometimes difficult, your strength blesses us.**

Welcoming God, we come together in reverent worship filling our minds,  
because your faithful love endures forever.

**Even though we are fragile people  
who sometimes feel lost and abandoned,  
God's love blesses us and never changes.**

**Thanks and praise be to our glorious God for ever and ever. Amen.**

**I'm glad to welcome you to online worship with Olympic View Community Church. We seek to welcome all of God's children to join us in bearing witness to the radically transforming power of God's love.**

**As we gather today, let's listen to this familiar hymn remade in a more contemporary format by Mutual Kumquat as we reflect on the ways we've been blessed, and how we offer thanks for God's providence.**

### **Reflection Video** *Come Thou Fount*

performed by Mutual Kumquat,

posted to ouTube by CDBaby, used with permission

## Invocation

Holy God, Creator of Life, you call us out of our dark places, offering us the grace of new life. When we see nothing but hopelessness, you surprise us with the breath of your spirit. Call us out of our complacency and routines, set us free from our self-imposed bonds, and fill us with your spirit of life, compassion, and peace, In the name of Jesus, your anointed one, we pray. **Amen.**

**We light a candle today to represent the Spirit burning within us, and among us, guiding our time together.** (light candle) **Amen.**

**In our epistle reading today, we hear Paul talk about the trials we will face for professing our faith, yet also the promise of redemption following Christ provides. As we listen to these words from 2 Corinthians, let's reflect on our own faith struggles, and remember the same promise that is extended to us.**

## Epistle Reading      **2 Corinthians 4:13—5:1 CEV**

In the Scriptures it says, "I spoke because I had faith." We have that same kind of faith. So we speak

because we know that God raised the Lord Jesus to life. And just as God raised Jesus, he will also raise us to life. Then he will bring us into his presence together with you.

All of this has been done for you, so that more and more people will know how kind God is and will praise and honor him.

We never give up. Our bodies are gradually dying, but we ourselves are being made stronger each day.

These little troubles are getting us ready for an eternal glory that will make all our troubles seem like nothing.

Things that are seen don't last forever, but things that are not seen are eternal. That's why we keep our minds on the things that cannot be seen.

Our bodies are like tents that we live in here on earth. But when these tents are destroyed, we know that God will give each of us a place to live. These homes will not be buildings that someone has made, but they are in heaven and will last forever.

## Scripture Video      **2 Corinthians 4:13—5:1** ***Renewed In The Inner Nature***

## A Time of Prayer

Today we come together as a community to share together our joys and concerns, and lift them to God in prayer. If you would like to share a specific request to be included in our communal prayer time, please leave a comment in the video below, or email myself at: [vicarglenn@gmail.com](mailto:vicarglenn@gmail.com), and I'll make sure to include that request in next week's service, as well as send a prayer chain email, if you would like.

## Joys and Concerns

Today, let's keep the youth in prayer with the recent overdose death of their friend Molly Hernandez. May God grant them strength and peace.

Let's also continue to keep George DeBon in prayer as he adjusts to life in the memory care unit and copes with the loss of his beloved Betty.

Lift Myrna as well as she misses her niece who passed recently.

Let's bring these concerns and others in our lives to God together in prayer.

## Pastoral Prayer

Gracious and eternal God, you have raised up your name and your word above everything; your steadfast love endures forever. In a world where every Day some division or strife arises we bring our prayers for others and for ourselves. Do not turn from the work of your hand, your human creation and the world in which you have set us: by your holy breath comfort the lonely; bind up the broken-hearted and those who mourn; calm the fearful; rejoice with those who celebrate; be present to those who call on your name, to those we named on our lips, and in the silence of our hearts, those whose concerns are known only to you; in Jesus' name we pray....

*Amen*

**In our gospel lesson this morning, we are reminded of the grace we are offered, and the importance of our relationship with our faith family. As we listen to these words from Mark, let's reflect on the grace we receive, as well as the grace we extend.**

## Gospel Lesson      Mark 3:20-35 CEV

Jesus went back home,[a] and once again such a large crowd gathered that there was no chance even to eat.

When Jesus' family heard what he was doing, they thought he was crazy and went to get him under control.

Some teachers of the Law of Moses came from Jerusalem and said, “This man is under the power of Beelzebul, the ruler of demons! He is even forcing out demons with the help of Beelzebul.”

Jesus told the people to gather around him. Then he spoke to them in riddles and said:How can Satan force himself out?

A nation whose people fight each other won't last very long.

And a family that fights won't last long either.

So if Satan fights against himself, that will be the end of him.

How can anyone break into the house of a strong man and steal his things, unless he first ties up the strong man? Then he can take everything.

I promise you that any of the sinful things you say or do can be forgiven, no matter how terrible those things are.

But if you speak against the Holy Spirit, you can never be forgiven. That sin will be held against you forever.

Jesus said this because the people were saying that he had an evil spirit in him.

Jesus' mother and brothers came and stood outside. Then they sent someone with a message for him to come out to them.

The crowd that was sitting around Jesus told him, “Your mother and your brothers and sisters[**b**] are outside and want to see you.”

Jesus asked, “Who is my mother and who are my brothers?”

Then he looked at the people sitting around him and said, “Here are my mother and my brothers.

Anyone who obeys God is my brother or sister or mother.”

## **Scripture Video      *Mark 3:20-35 Doing The Work Of God***

Lectionary bible reading

<https://youtu.be/BZpXz8UCPLE>

## **Message      *Family Values***

Most families have that one member who's just a little “different,” don't they. That one aunt or uncle who doesn't quite fit into the family norm, or whose lifestyle is contrary to what society considers “acceptable.” Often they are the free spirit in the group, or the “black sheep” of the family. They are the ones everybody rolls their eyes about when they are referenced, Or the ones they are forced to tolerate at family gatherings. Yet for the children and youth of the family, they're often the cool aunts or uncles, the ones that make family time fun, probably because they make the adults so uncomfortable. But what is it about crazy Uncle Eddie or Cousin Byron that makes the family so uncomfortable? Why do they feel ashamed of them?

I think we can all identify with that illustration, unless of course you ARE that “different” family member. Whether we like it or not, we all worry to some extent about what others will think of us, whether as individuals, or members of a group such as one's family. We don't want to stick out in a negative way. To do so implies that we won't be included in the “in” crowd. After all, nobody likes to be excluded.

But is the “in” crowd always the best place to be? Certainly it makes everyday life easier when you're on the same page with most of your family, or your neighborhood or town. You know what the expectations of thought and behavior are, and you accommodate them to fit in, to show unity with those around you. When everybody has the same expectations and standard of behavior, there's a lot less discord and conflict. It's how we as human beings have evolved socially to ensure the stability of the communities we form.

And there are positive aspects to “fitting in.” Some standards are based on the “golden rule,” doing unto others as you would have done unto you, establishing mutual respect for each other. Others such as honoring the elderly and one's parents ensure the most vulnerable are cared for. But it's not just social rules that define what's “normal and acceptable.” Within our churches we have our own sets of norms and traditions. What we consider appropriate in dress, behavior, even how we think is often identified in terms of what is “normal” or “acceptable.” So what do we do with those who stick out from the crowd? The “crazy relatives” who want to be a part of our faith family. Do we roll our eyes? Or perhaps even something more assertive, like the infamous “cold shoulder” or even resorting to active exclusion or persecution? What if the crazy uncle among us is Jesus?

In our gospel story today, that's the scenario we enter into with him. He's been on the road for a little while preaching, healing, and exorcising with an “o” and now he's back on the home turf in Galilee, seeking a little table fellowship with the home team. But a nice relaxing evening with friends is not on his agenda, unfortunately. The greater denomination has sent representatives to investigate and determine if what he is doing fits in with church norms and rules.

For us in the Pacific Northwest district of the Church of the Brethren, that's a familiar sounding scenario. And what is it that Jesus is doing, or what about his behavior is causing such a stir? Well, for starters, he's going around healing people and casting out demons. There were certainly plenty of healers going around in those days, but he's doing it in a way that doesn't fit in with the rules. He's doing it on the Sabbath and taking credit as the conduit of God's Spirit in doing so. That's just not how it's done. That's not our tradition. And as far as casting out demons is concerned, a big part of religious leadership doesn't even acknowledge the existence of demons, yet these possibly fictional entities seem to be on speaking terms with Jesus, and acknowledge him as God incarnate.

For the scribes who have journeyed from Jerusalem, this man is an embarrassment to the faith. He doesn't play according to the rules. He just doesn't fit in. Some in the crowd think he's just plain crazy. That opinion has gained such traction that word of it has reached his

family up the road in Nazareth. Mary's crazy kid is at it again. I can almost picture her and his human siblings on the road to Capernaum, not meeting the gaze of others, hoping not to run into anyone they may know, just hoping they can get there and round him up to take back to the safety of home and out of the public eye.

Oh the shame upon shame for poor Mary. I'm sure there's been whispers and talk about Jesus since day one, being conceived a little early in light of the timing of her marriage to Joseph. Now I'm sure the whispers are along the lines of, "well, you reap what you sow." Thank goodness none of us would ever think like that.

Now these church leaders are even saying he's doing the work of the devil. Of course, Jesus debunks that pretty handily from a logical point of view. It doesn't make sense for the devil to be casting out his own demons. Kind of defeats the purpose of possession in the first place. But as we know well in today's world, it doesn't matter if a rumor is true. The damage is done regardless. In hindsight, it can be easy for us to look at this story and be critical of the crowd and the church authorities, even of Christ's human family. But is it so far off the mark from us?

What norms do we cling to, and who do we whisper about that don't fit in with those norms. After all, whether we are preaching up front or serving on a committee, organizing potlucks or setting up worship, we are all a part of "church authority." Traditionally Christianity places Christ at the base of all of those structures, and in doing so, uses the authority derived from "doing the work of the body" to bolster their own authority. In those arenas, there is always a "right way" and a "wrong way" of doing things, and all too often, those who are "in" and those who are "out."

Yet, what can be problematic to think about in these scenarios is that these structures are not inherently bad or evil things. All of these organizations, the Temple authorities in Jesus' day, the contemporary church, and the family, are trying to maintain domestic and religious life in the midst of a troubled world.

Yet from Jesus' perspective, these familiar and seemingly benign institutions are beyond the pale of his ministry. What is odd and unique about Jesus' ministry is that he is open to everybody: Gentiles, Jews, the poor, the demented, the sick, working class people, women, sexual outcasts, even tax collectors! The only people who provoke Jesus' intolerance are his family and the normal, law-abiding scribes and Pharisees. The ones closest to him, his family, and those who are most like him, the religious authorities, those dedicated to a life of piety, are those that are farthest from him. They are the least able to make the leap from their dedication to social and religious norms to open hearted love of God's beloved, disfigured humanity.

For these people, Jesus' disordered love of humanity feels like falling off a cliff into chaos best symbolized by the demonic, or insanity. It's just so far from "normal."

Jesus' work is synonymous with that of the Holy Spirit, and he makes the point that to criticize that "unusual" work, is to blaspheme the Holy Spirit, God incarnate among us.

If we were to transpose this viewpoint into our own time, instead of lepers and demoniacs, who might we see crowding around Jesus? Would it be the disabled or legless Afghan or Palestinian children? Or maybe a group of people reeking of coffee and cigarettes at an AA meeting? A lesbian mother with a baby on her hip? When we think about who is near Jesus, it is not the morally perfect. It is just the diverse mess that humanity is made up of, with all of its moral, physical, spiritual beauty AND all of its imperfections. The only ones not in the picture, not pressing in at the doors and windows, desperate and aching to see Jesus, are the ones who think they know what religious and family life is "supposed" to look like, what is universally "normal." Jesus is making the point that we cannot set criteria and rules for the workings of the Spirit. We can't define who is "in" and who is "out," because the Spirit will break those rules or criteria the moment we do.

This passage also points out the difficulty of defining what the work of the Holy Spirit is. We all know the struggle of trying to discern the leadings of the Spirit. But perhaps we can gain a nugget of wisdom from this scripture. We can build on the theme of healing that runs throughout this section of Mark's gospel. That is one constant criteria which we can be certain is of the Spirit. If we look at our criteria, does it have healing as its nature and focus? It was the desire for healing that drew people to Jesus. If we have compassion for our own wounds, and the wounds of others, we might find ourselves in the crowd devoted to Jesus, instead of in the "legitimate" family that Jesus rejects. We might find that we no longer need to define what is "normal" and actively seek the Spirit at work in whatever form or behavior we encounter. Maybe a membership card with the "in" crowd won't have the same relevance. That attitude of not needing to be officially "in" is a promising sign from the younger generations that are coming up.

In a 2011, a story in the journal *Christian Century*, described the new perspective of millennials with regards to church membership. The article discussed the increasing tendency of people to attend church without becoming formal members. Apparently many in the millennial generation cannot see the point of having their names on membership roles. Millennials are hypersensitive to hypocrisy. They want any association that they join to be "authentic" and they prefer "loose connections" that do not tie them down to a particular creed or set of criteria. In other words, they don't want to subscribe to a forced sense of what is "normal." What about us?

Is what we cling to as "normal" something of the Spirit or our own making? Are there those in our own families, biological or spiritual, that we roll our eyes at? Jesus makes clear the only criteria we are to use is that of the Spirit. I hope and pray as we leave here today, as individuals, as members of leadership, and as a community of faith, we seek to be the home of the broken, a place for those pressing at the doors and windows to be

with Jesus, not the home that is full of “normal” people suspicious of the very Spirit we are to seek always. May it be so, Amen.

## Call to Serve.

Paul writes of confidence in the power of God revealed in the resurrection of Jesus that must underlie a life of faithfulness and generosity: “I believed, and so I spoke”. Today, let us believe, and give with generosity that God’s goodness may be known in the world. As we continue to seek to be a place of compassion and support to our community, we ask that you give prayerful consideration as to how you may support our efforts. If you would like to make a donation, gifts can still be mailed to our church office, or online donations can be made through the link in the video description. Thanks again for all your support, and may we continue to work together to keep being a place of ministry that seeks to promote the growth of God's shalom around us. Today...

## A Time for Reflection

### Reflection on the Word [Video]

### *With Happy Voices Singing,*

text by William G. Tarrant,  
played by Annie Center

<https://youtu.be/-6K2zdZNqyc>

## The Prayer of Thanksgiving

Generous God, take our gifts this day and use them so that we may be part of your great work in this world. Through our giving, bring justice and love closer to all, not just in our community but in the world beyond these walls. Strengthen our church so that we grow together each day into a powerful voice for healing and peace. Amen.

## Blessing/Assurance

Go into the world with assurance, hope and promise:  
the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ rest upon you – and even unsettle you;  
the love of God, creator and giver of life, embrace you – and even confront you;  
and the presence of the Holy Spirit encourage you – and surprise you,  
this day and all your days. **Amen**

**As we extinguish this candle, let’s carry and reflect it’s Divine spark in each of our lives in the week to come. Amen.**



## Postlude

## *We Give Thanks Unto You,*

text based on Psalm 136 by Marty Haugen,  
music by Marty Haugen,  
played by Annie Center

<https://youtu.be/52TJeSimuUk>