



Seventh Sunday of Easter

29 May 2022

The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd in Athens, Ohio--seeking to know and serve Christ in loving service to the campus, the community, and the world.

Today's printed [Order of Worship](#)

The Lessons

Lessons for the Seventh Sunday of Easter (The Sunday after Ascension Day): Acts of the Apostles: 16: 16-34; Psalm 97 (SUNG); Revelation to John: 22: 12-14, 16-17, 20-21; John 17: 20-26.

<https://www.lectionarypage.net>

The Collect

O God, you have prepared for those who love you such good things as surpass our understanding: Pour into our hearts such love towards you, that we, loving you in all things and above all things, may obtain your promises, which exceed all that we can desire; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

The Gospel



John 17:20-26

Jesus prayed for his disciples, and then he said. "I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that

they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

"Righteous Father, the world does not know you, but I know you; and these know that you have sent me. I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them."

The Sermon

Show You Care

I've received some strange criticisms over the years; enough to realize that sometimes criticisms reveal more about the person doing the criticizing than they do about me. One of the most consistent criticisms I've received started when I was in seminary.

It was the last semester of my senior or last year of the three-year academic and religious formation degree required for all people who feel called to ordained ministry in the Episcopal Church. That last semester we had to take Homiletics 2, a class of preaching, listening to each other preach and evaluating each other. One of our assignments was to preach a sermon for a tragic situation of our choosing. It was spring of 2007, shortly after the mass shooting at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, Virginia where 32 people including the shooter lost their lives, 17 more were wounded, and 6 suffered injury from jumping out of windows to escape the shooter. Maybe because it was in the news, or maybe because I was still processing it, or maybe because I was already feeling drawn to a campus community, or maybe because I was living on a campus for higher education, I chose to write a sermon for a *fictional* funeral of a *fictional* young woman I made up who had died in a *fictional* mass shooting. I used some of my own personal memories to try and make my fictional character real and relatable. I preached on love, the shared grief and powerlessness the tragedy produced that will linger long after the news moved on, and how as a community we can grieve together by caring for each other and in so doing find God in the midst of senseless tragedy.

The toughest part of that class was often the feedback and evaluation by our professor, who was one of the toughest at seminary, and my classmates. Overall, the feedback I got from my professor and classmates was positive. A few classmates said it helped them process the Virginia Tech shooting. But there is always that person who doesn't like a sermon. That day one of my classmates' feedback was he thought I had taken on too much. He said I shouldn't talk about such things because I was out of my league, and he couldn't understand how or why I could care about something he believed had nothing to do with me or him, something that happened in another place and probably was something none of us would deal with in the future.

That was not the only time I was criticized for caring by people both in and outside the church. While my colleagues, friends and acquaintances are certainly entitled to their own opinions, I respectfully disagree with that one. I don't believe it is wrong to care. In fact, I believe it is Christ-like to care about the world and everyone in it. I know it is not easy. I know it will lead to heart ache and heart break. But the pain does not mean caring is wrong.

It seems to me not caring is the stuff of sin that causes even more pain, because not caring for each other is where I believe many tragedies like the mass shootings we've had far too often in the last few weeks comes from. Not giving a thought for the people who will live with the weight of grief for the rest of their lives from an action that took a fraction of a second is not caring. Just like not bothering to learn about the complex ecosystems of forests before deciding to strip an entire forest of every single tree at once that causes immense damage to the soil, air, and animals that lived in that forest is another example of not caring. In the reading from Acts of the Apostles this morning we see how no one cared for a young girl who was possessed with a spirit of divination. One of the many, many reasons why slavery is wrong is we saw those who exploited her labor cared more about the income they lost when Paul healed her. Not even Paul seemed to care about her future welfare. It wasn't until Paul showed care for the jailer that the story turned around. Unfortunately, we only hear how it turned around for Paul, not the girl.

One of the good friends I made in seminary was – like me - single at the time. Unlike me, however, as can happen when you are in a high stress situation in a small intentional community, she developed a romantic crush on a fellow seminarian who was married and had five children. I listened to my friend talk about how her crush confided in her he didn't think his wife understood him and how excited he was to work with her, and she told me how excited she got every time she saw him. When she asked my thoughts, I said to her I don't consider married men to be available nor do I see them as sexually attractive. She asked how I did that. I said because I see them as connected to their spouses and their children, who I also know. I can foresee the pain and suffering affairs and divorces can cause families. Because I care for the spouses and children in those families, I do not want to cause them pain they will deal with for the rest of their lives. It just isn't about the Ten Commandments or church dogma, or the rules set forth by bishops for seminarians, it's about the care at the heart of those things, a care based on the love of God embodied in Jesus, who shows us with his words and actions how much he and how much God cares.

There used to be a popular acronym inspired by a book both liberal and conservative Christians embraced: *WWJD*. We put it on everything we could think of: jewelry, clothing, water bottles, banners, mugs, and stickers. It stood for *What would Jesus do?* and was later changed to *What would Jesus want me to do*. Either way, it was intended to inspire those of us who follow Jesus today to think how our words and our actions might reflect the love of God in Christ instead of our own selfish ambitions, desires, fears, phobias, or greed. It's gone out of fashion now, but it isn't a bad lens through which to view the world and our lives as individuals and a church.

If we look at today's Gospel, we see one of the ways Jesus showed his care. He prayed. If we look at all four Gospels, we'd see Jesus prayed a lot. Sometimes he prayed in a formal corporate religious setting, like when he went to worship services. Other times he prayed in private. Sometimes – like we see in today's Gospel reading - he prayed with his disciples. Today's Gospel reveals *what* Jesus prayed. He prayed for those he cared for. Those who followed him then and those who will follow him in the future, that means you and me. We don't think about that very often. Jesus prayed for us. Still is

praying for us, which means Jesus is thinking about us. Because Jesus cares.

Although I understand the emotion behind the statement, I am disappointed every time I hear someone say prayers don't matter, only actions matter. If that were true, then why did Jesus pray so much? In today's Gospel his prayer happens just before his arrest, trial, death, and resurrection. Jesus' shows us today that prayer is important, even when we might feel powerless. Prayer is a connection between people and God and with each other, not a manipulation to get people or God to do what we want. Prayer is something we can do when faced with systems or situations we can't solve or fix by ourselves. Prayer can be a way we are connected, especially when we are broken, when we feel the pain of loss, are afraid, or feel isolated. Prayer can help determine if the action we are contemplating is Christ-like or not. Plenty of people commit atrocities in the name of God or Jesus, but that does not make what they did Christ-like, and certainly does not justify intentional harm.

Caring can be tiring, which is why having a connection with God and each other is also important. When we care for each other, even if it is just praying for each other, it can help ease suffering. It might not erase the past, but it can help us accept the present and help us realize none of us has to be alone. Caring means giving up something of ourselves that is difficult to do: things like unhealthy ego and pride, fear, resentment of those who are different, or desiring revenge. It means intentionally looking for common ground and acknowledging our shared humanity, even our shared suffering. Caring does not mean letting someone harm us or others. Caring can and must have healthy emotional, spiritual, and physical boundaries. That's why its helpful to keep looking at Jesus to discern what care looks like.

Today I invite you to show you care. To embody the love of Jesus. Our ministries are definitely an embodiment of care. The free face masks we are continuing to give away, wearing a mask whenever we are in the building shows we care about each other, the COVID-19 memorial that continues to draw visitors, making room for two people who were not members of this parish to have their cremains interred by our columbarium, the cabinet of sharing outdoor food panty, the prayer shawl ministry, are just a few ways of showing we care. Starting this week, I will be inviting you all and anyone else to join me on the front porch every Wednesday at noon for prayer. These are public and corporate expressions of care that reveal God's love present in the world.

The invitation I have for you all is to consider how you can express this care as an individual in your family, workplace, neighborhood, here at church, wherever you find yourself this week. Maybe help a neighbor or spouse with a difficult or mundane chore without being asked. Maybe tell someone you are grateful for them or something they did, even if it wasn't something they did for you. Is there someone who irritates you? Maybe cut them some slack. Maybe, like I did with my friend in seminary (who, by the way, is now happily married to a wonderful man) remind them they can be better. One of my practices is every time I see a dead animal or trash on the side of the road I say the prayer, "Lord, please forgive us for our carelessness." I have a feeling you know best how you can show care.

Caring can have a positive impact. I believe when someone is shown care, they are more likely to show care for themselves and others. Care, even through difficult situations that can help us connect to each other and to God. That kind of connection might just influence the kind of change that can make the world better for everyone. It might not happen quickly or all at once. But like resurrection life, like that tiny mustard seed Jesus talked about, what starts small, even caring, can grow and spread.

Please include in your prayers

In our world, we pray for Justin, Archbishop of Canterbury, and for Michael, our Presiding Bishop; we pray for peace with justice throughout the Middle East. We pray for the victims of the coronavirus.. We pray for all people affected by natural and environmental disasters. We pray also for the people who are suffering from war, especially the people of Ukraine, and all asylum seekers, immigrants and refugees. We pray for Joe our President, Kamala our Vice-President, Mike, our Governor, the Supreme Court and the members of Congress.

In our diocese, In our diocese, we pray for our Provisional Bishop Wayne, the search process for a new bishop, and for Kenneth, Nedi, and Wendell our assisting bishops.

In our parish, we pray for Good Shepherd's continued growth, for our Rector Rev. Deborah Woolsey, for our Associate Priests, Rev. Leslie Flemming, and Rev. David McCoy, for our ministry to students, the university, and the community. We pray for our friends at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Merida, Mexico.

Those Whom our Prayers are Requested: Belle, Bill S., Bud and Carol, Chris L., Elena, Gloria R., Gordon, Jan S, Lacey, Laura, Miriam, Sharon, Bill, Annie and Kathleen, T.C., Tommy, Jeannet Barratt, Douglas Campbell, Zelma Coleman, Lee Kembell-Cook, Glinnis Davies, Richard DeNune, Caryl Docherty, Norm Fox, Jan Gault, Jennifer Hall, Debbie Hunsberger, Nancy and Bob Jackson, Peter Kachenko and family, Julie Nehls, Linda Nippert, Lauren O'Brien, Dale Paul, Dan and Nancy Reedy, Ann Shelly, Michael Vaughn, Sandi White, Patti Williams, Zita Zolpys, and we pray for all who care for them. **

Anniversary: Geoff and Alex Buckley (6/2)

The Altar Flowers: are given in loving memory of Gus and Kosta (Alex) Karageorge by Sophia Karageorge and family.

** Full names are normally not published online but since the prayer list is not printed for the in-house 10:30 service, we will publish full names unless requested otherwise. If you have a name to be added to the prayer list, Lynn Graham maintains this information. Lynn may be reached at **740-593-5098** or grahammowery@aol.com.

A Prayer for Grieving our Lost Children
written by Walter Brueggemann

Another brutality, another school killing, another grief beyond telling... and loss.. in Colorado, in Wisconsin among the Amish, in Virginia, in Connecticut, in Florida, in Texas. Where Next?

We are reduced to weeping silence, even as we breed a violent culture, even as we kill the sons and daughters of our “enemies”, even as we fail to live and cherish and respect the forgotten of our common life.

There is no joy among us as we empty our schoolhouses; there is no health among us as we move in fear and bottomless anxiety; there is little hope among us as we fall helpless before the gunshot and the shriek and the blood and the panic; we pray to you only because we do not know what else to do. So we pray, move powerfully in our body politic, move us toward peaceableness that does not want to hurt or to kill, move toward justice that the troubled and the forgotten may know mercy, move toward forgiveness that we may escape the trap of revenge.

Empower us to turn our weapons to acts of mercy, to turn our missiles to gestures of friendship, to turn our bombs to policies of reconciliation; and while we are turning, hear our sadness, our loss, our bitterness.

We dare to pray our needfulness to you because you have been there on that gray Friday, and watched your Son be murdered for “reasons of state.”

Good God, do Easter! Here and among these families, here and in all our places of brutality.

Move our Easter grief now... without too much innocence – to your Sunday joy.

We pray in the one crucified and risen who is our Lord and Savior.

- *From Prayers for a Privileged People, Abingdon Press, 2008*

A Prayer for Memorial Day



Almighty God, our heavenly Father in whose hands are the living and the dead: We give you thanks for all your servants who have laid down their lives in the service of their country, grant to them your mercy and the light of your presence; and give us a lively sense of your righteous will that the work which you have begun in them may be perfected, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. – Adapted from the BCP, 1928

At-Home Worship

Christ Church Cathedral Cincinnati live streams via Vimeo its services Sundays at 10 a.m. These are saved and can be watched later without having to log in.

<https://vimeo.com/event/4306>

Washington D C -- there's much to explore at the the National Cathedral's online portal.

<https://cathedral.org/worship/>

Calendar

Coming Up:

Monday, May 30, Memorial Day, Office closed

Wednesday, June 1, 12:00 noon - - Prayers on the Porch

Thursday, June 2, Office closed

Sunday, June 5, 10:30 a.m. - - Holy Eucharist

Wednesday, June 8, 12:00 noon - - Prayers on the Porch

Sunday, June 12, 10:30 a.m. - - Holy Eucharist

Wednesday, June 15, 12:00 noon - - Prayers on the Porch

Thursday, June 16, 7:00 p.m. - - Vestry Meeting, ZOOM

Sunday, June 19, 10:30 a.m. - - Holy Eucharist

Wednesday, June 22, 12:00 noon - - Prayers on the Porch

Sunday, June 26, 10:30 a.m. - - Holy Eucharist

Wednesday, June 29, 12:00 noon - - Prayers on the Porch

Sunday, July 3, 10:30 a.m. - - Holy Eucharist

**Starting in June CrossRoads Café is open Mon-Fr 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
and Sundays after church.**

Notes & Announcements

Prayers on the Porch Wednesdays in June at Noon

You are invited to join Mother Deborah every Wednesday in the month of June on the porch of the church for a midday prayer service. Each week will have a different focus depending on current events.

June 1 will focus on grieving gun violence in our country as we grieve the recent mass shootings.

We hope you can join us.



**CrossRoads Café
June Hours**



Starting Tuesday May 31, CrossRoads will be open weekdays in June 9:00 am - 11:30 pm on the front porch of the church. Stop by for coffee, espresso drinks, iced coffee, iced tea. We are giving away ice water. Stay a bit and relax with us. CrossRoads will be closed Monday, May 30 for Memorial Day.

UPDATING PRAYER LIST: The prayer list will be updated for Pentecost (June 5, 2022). If there are names that should remain on the prayer list, please let me know by May 30; otherwise, the name will be removed from the prayer list. If you have names that need to be added the prayer list, please let me know.

Lynn Graham, 593-5098 (grahammowery@aol.com).



Memorial Day Monday May 30, 2022

If you are looking for a ceremony to mark the national holiday, Mother Deborah invites you to join her at 1:00 pm at Cemetery 1 for the NAMI Memorial Day ceremony. In addition to the prayer she will lead, the ceremony includes biographies and presentation of wreaths in memory of residents of the Ridges Asylum, speeches by political officials, NAMI officials, and music. It's a lovely

ceremony and a way to mark the day that is uniquely appropriate to our Athens Community.

Office Hours

Administrative Office will close at Noon on Thursday, May 26 and also will be closed on Memorial day (Monday, May 30). It will be open May 31 - June 1. Will be closed on Thursday, June 2 and resume regular hours Monday, June 6.

David Black Burial Postponed

The interment of David Black's cremains in the columbarium has been postponed due to illness in the family. We will let you know when a new date is chosen. Until then we pray the family members get better soon.

[Supporting Humanitarian
Response to the Crisis in
Ukraine](#)

Episcopal Relief & Development
(Click above link for more.)



Sometimes so much beauty is difficult to hold up.



It is nice to see that some of these 'classic' pollinators are still around besides flies and other riff-raff.



Contacts, Information

Quick Links

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Pandemic Notes:

[Link to the DSO guidelines for returning to in-person worship](#)

In light of local conditions we request all persons wear masks inside the church building regardless of vaccination status.

Office Hours: 10:00 a.m.– 2:00 p.m.,
Monday through Thursday.
Masks are required.

The **Church Building** is not open for public meetings and gatherings but during office/CrossRoads hours the **thrift shop** and **chapel** are available for individuals.
Masks are required.

Contact Information

For pastoral needs, please contact The Rev. Deborah Woolsey at 937-689-8895 (cell) or 740-593-6877 (church), or by e-mail at revdebwoolsey@gmail.com.

To find out more about Good Shepherd and other matters, please contact Alex Buckley, Senior Warden, at 740-593-5513 or by e-mail at macbuck@yahoo.com.

For maintenance matters, please leave a note at the office or contact Dana Carlson, Junior Warden, at 740-664-2022 or by e-mail at carlsondana@hotmail.com. **For emergencies**, please call The Rev. Deborah Woolsey at 937-689-8895.

NON-emergency messages can be left on the church's answering machine (740-593-6877). The parish office administrator is Barbara Martin (740-593-6877) or barbara@chogs.org.

The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd
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chogs@chogs.org
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DONATE to Good Shepherd

This takes you to the Parish Home page where you can donate on-line via PayPal, If you have a preference, please indicate on the the "Add special instructions to the seller" section the purpose of the donation -- e.g. organ fund, plate collection, etc.

Check out the Church's [YouTube Channel](#).

LIKE us on Facebook [Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd 45701](#)

Office Hours:

10:00 am - 2:00 pm
Monday - Thursday

Masks are required.