



"Into the Weeds" by Jan Richardson

Grace Episcopal Church

Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

July 19, 2020 | 9:30am

Ministers | All of Us

Rector | Wren Blessing

Curate | Stephen Crippen

Preacher | Barb McAllister

Music | Ann Strickland

flowers

here we are
running with the weeds
colors exaggerated
pistils wild
embarrassing the calm family flowers oh
here we are
flourishing for the field
and the name of the place
is Love

~ *Lucille Clifton*

A bell rings. We listen to the longing in our hearts.

Gathering Song | Take O Take Me as I Am

by John Bell

Take O take me as I am Sum-mon out what I shall be

Set your seal u-pon my heart and live in me.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

After the gathering song, the Officiant invites us to stand and says

- Officiant We are not alone.
People We live in God's world.
Officiant We are listening, Holy One.
People Give us hope, give us courage.
Officiant God, bless every step that we are taking.
People And God, bless the earth beneath our feet.

We remain standing and sing together.

Opening Song | Blackbird

by John Lennon & Paul McCartney

Blackbird singing in the dead of night
Take these broken wings and learn to fly
All your life
You were only waiting for this moment to arise

Black bird singing in the dead of night
Take these sunken eyes and learn to see
All your life
You were only waiting for this moment to be free

Blackbird fly, Blackbird fly
Into the light of the dark black night.

Blackbird singing in the dead of night
Take these broken wings and learn to fly
All your life
You were only waiting for this moment to arise

Blackbird fly, Blackbird fly
Into the light of the dark black night.

All your life
You were only waiting for this moment to arise
You were only waiting for this moment to arise
You were only waiting for this moment to arise

The Collect

Officiant The Lord be with you.

People And also with you.

Officiant Let us pray.

Gracious God, the fountain of all wisdom, you know what we need before we ask. Your whole creation longs for you. Fill us with your life-giving Spirit. Strengthen us to serve you. Open our hearts in compassion for the life of the whole world. **Amen.**

WE TELL THE STORY

We are seated for the reading.

The First Reading | Isaiah 44:6-8

Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel,
and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts:

I am the first and I am the last;
besides me there is no god.

Who is like me? Let them proclaim it,
let them declare and set it forth before me.

Who has announced from of old the things to come?
Let them tell us what is yet to be.

Do not fear, or be afraid;
have I not told you from of old and declared it?
You are my witnesses!

Is there any god besides me?
There is no other rock; I know not one.

After the reading, the reader will say
The Word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

We stand and say the Psalm.

Psalm | 86:11-17

Teach me your way, O Lord,
and I will walk in your truth;
knit my heart to you that I may fear your Name.

**I will thank you, O Lord my God, with all my heart,
and glorify your Name for evermore.**

For great is your love toward me;
you have delivered me from the nethermost Pit.

**The arrogant rise up against me, O God,
and a band of violent men seeks my life;
they have not set you before their eyes.**

But you, O Lord, are gracious and full of compassion,
slow to anger, and full of kindness and truth.

**Turn to me and have mercy upon me;
give your strength to your servant;
and save the child of your handmaid.**

Show me a sign of your favor,
so that those who hate me may see it and be ashamed;
because you, O Lord, have helped me and comforted me.

We are seated for the second reading.

The Second Reading | Romans 8:12-25

Brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh — for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, “Abba! Father!” it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ— if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

After the reading, the reader will say

The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

We stand together and sing

Gospel Song | Bridge Over Troubled Waters *Offered by Molly & Matt Perri*

by Paul Simon

When you're weary, feeling small
When tears are in your eyes, I will dry them all, all
I'm on your side, oh, when times get rough
And friends just can't be found
Like a bridge over troubled water
I will lay me down
Like a bridge over troubled water
I will lay me down

When you're down and out
When you're on the street
When evening falls so hard
I will comfort you
I'll take your part, oh, when darkness comes
And pain is all around
Like a bridge over troubled water
I will lay me down
Like a bridge over troubled water
I will lay me down

Sail on silver girl
Sail on by
Your time has come to shine
All your dreams are on their way
See how they shine
Oh, if you need a friend
I'm sailing right behind
Like a bridge over troubled water
I will ease your mind
Like a bridge over troubled water
I will ease your mind

The Officiant introduces the Gospel by saying

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

The Gospel | Matthew 13:24-30,36-43

Jesus put before the crowd another parable: “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?’ He answered, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The slaves said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’ But he replied, ‘No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.’”

Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.” He answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!”

After the Gospel the Officiant will say

The Gospel of the Lord.

People Praise to you, Lord Christ.

OUR RESPONSE TO THE STORY

The Homily

Affirmation of Faith

We stand and say

**We believe in God above us,
maker and sustainer of all life,
of sun and moon,
of water and earth,
of all humanity.**

**We believe in God beside us,
Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh,
born of a woman's womb, servant of the poor,
he was tortured and nailed to a tree.
Knowing full passion and deep sorrow, he died forsaken.
He descended into the earth to the place of death.
On the third day he rose from the tomb.
He ascended into heaven to be everywhere present,
and his Kingdom will one day be known.**

**We believe in God within us,
the Holy Spirit of Pentecostal fire,
life-giving breath of the Church.
She is the Spirit of healing and forgiveness,
source of resurrection and of life everlasting. Amen**

We gather silently in prayer.

The Prayers of the People

Sandra McCracken

Two staves of musical notation in G major, 4/4 time. The first staff contains the lyrics: "Have mer - cy on___ me. Have mer-cy on___ me." The second staff contains the lyrics: "Oh, Lord, have mer___cy. Oh, Lord, have mer_____cy." The music features a simple melody with some ties and rests.

Silence

Leader O God our teacher, show us your ways, and guide all people of faith. We pray especially for this congregation and its leaders, gathered together while standing apart; and for our partners in ministry at La Iglesia de la Resurrección, Mount Vernon.

We offer additional prayers for the church, silently or aloud

Leader Hear us, O God.

People Your mercy is great.

Leader O God our bridge builder, save all nations from injustice and violence. Gather all people into one human family. Break the chains of the oppressor. We pray especially for this nation during a time of crisis, and dawning justice.

We offer additional prayers for the nations, silently or aloud.

Leader Hear us, O God.

People Your mercy is great.

Leader O God our creator, you hear the great longing of the earth itself, and know the needs of every living creature. Awaken and strengthen us to work for the restoration of rivers and seas, forests and fields, earth and sky. We pray especially for all who depend on this land for their health and life.

We offer additional prayers for the world and this community, silently or aloud.

Leader Hear us, O God.

People Your mercy is great.

Leader O God our midwife, you bring new life to birth, and restore health to those who are sick. Deliver us from despair, and stir up your compassion within us for all who suffer, all who are in trouble, and all who are frightened or alone. We pray especially for those on our parish prayer list.

We offer additional prayers for all in need, silently or aloud.

Leader Hear us, O God.

People Your mercy is great.

Leader O God our vintner, you lovingly gather all the fruits of the vine. We pray for all who have gone before us, and for all who mourn. Gather us with them at your eternal feast of resurrection.

We offer additional prayers for those who have died, silently or aloud.

Leader Hear us, O God.

People Your mercy is great.

Oh, help my un - be - lief. Oh, help my un - be - lief.

Oh, Lord, have mer____cy. Oh, Lord, have mer_____cy.

Officiant Let us pray.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.**

Give us this day our daily bread.

**And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.**

**And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Offertory Song | One Fine Day *Offered by Dusty Collings and Marcus Lang*

by Brian Eno & David Byrne

While we cannot gather in person, we make our weekly offerings online here: <https://www.gracehere.org/online-giving/>.

Saw the wanderin' eye inside my heart,
Shouts and battle cries from every part,
I can see those tears every one is true,
When the door appears I'll go right through,

I stand in liquid light like everyone,
I built my life with rhyme to carry on,
And it gives me hope to see you there,
The things I used to know that one fine-

One fine day, One fine day,

In a small dark room where I will wait,
Face to face I find I contemplate,
Even though everyone is made of clay,
Everything can change that-

One fine day, One fine day, One fine day

Then before my eyes, is standing still
I beheld it there, a city on a hill
I complete my tasks, one by one
I remove my masks, when I am done,

Then a piece of mind fell over me,
In these troubled times I still can see,
We can use the stars, to guide the way,
It is not that far, that-

One fine day, One fine day, One fine day,
One fine day.

The Blessing

The Officiant offers a blessing.

The blessing of the one, holy, and undivided Trinity be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Closing Song | Garden Song

by David Mallett

Inch by inch, row by row
Gonna make this garden grow
All it takes is a rake and a hoe
And a piece of fertile ground

Inch by inch, row by row
Someone bless these seeds I sow
Someone warm them from below
'Till the rain comes tumblin' down

Grain for grain, sun and rain
Find my way in Nature's chain
Tune my body and my brain
To the music from the land

Plant your rows straight and long
Temper them with prayer and song
Mother Earth will make you strong
If you give her loving care

Inch by inch, row by row
Gonna make this garden grow
All it takes is a rake and a hoe
And a piece of fertile ground

Inch by inch, row by row
Someone bless these seeds I sow
Someone warm them from below
'Till the rain comes tumblin' down

Birthdays and Anniversaries

Using the Zoom chat window, please share a milestone that we can recognize together.

We will sing, "God Grant Them Many Years."

The Peace

We conclude with the sharing of God's peace.

Officiant Now the peace of the Lord be always with you.

All And also with you.

Please stay online to join in a small group for a coffee hour conversation.

Families with children at home are invited to join in this Zoom gathering:

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/9636148549?pwd=eldGdDdUciswaGZTcHhEQ3guZTBIZz09>

A Map of the Kingdom

You are not far from the Kingdom of God. – Mark 12:34

How near to the borders can we venture,
how close to the looming or invisible walls
without being taken, trapped like wild game,
netted like unsuspecting fish that hover
in their own blue kingdom
to be suddenly tangled then yanked high
into a world of light and air?

Some creatures love to be sought, not found,
love to be caught, not bound,
to be lured within range,
ever quite aware of where the net
has cast itself—much wider than we suspect.

Perhaps our sore lips already know the foreign parts of speech.
Listen. It almost sounds like plainchant.
Or jazz. An anthem, a cadence
to coax and measure our steps.

We should watch where we walk.
We should watch what we say.

A kingdom of margins will find us.
God's grammar is not far from our tongues.

~ David Wright, from "A Liturgy for Stones"