

Worship on June 20, 2021 (Father's Day)

Order of worship

We Gather

- Welcome and Announcements
- Call to worship
- Praise song – The River Is Here
- Prayer for worship + Lord's Prayer
- Words of Assurance

We Listen

- Prayer for illumination
- Scripture: Luke 15:11-32
- Sermon: Father's Love
- The Lord's Table

We Respond

- Offering – How Deep The Father's Love For Us

We Serve

- Benediction

Ponder Upon Questions

Announcements:

- . Welcome! Grace and peace to you all who are worshipping God with us live right now and those who are worshipping God through this video. This is Sunday, June 20th, 2021. We are going to have the Lord's Table, so please prepare your own elements.
- . No Bible study. Please enjoy Father's Day! ☺
- . Martha's Table served 60 lunches this week.
- . Worship volunteers are always welcome.
- . Thank you for your support with your gifts. May God use us and our gifts for his kingdom.

As we come into the presence of our God, let us calm down our hearts and minds, and focus on our Lord.

Responsive Call to Worship

One: Give thanks to the Lord, for God is good;

All: God's steadfast love endures forever.

One: We have seen God's wondrous works all around us,

All: so we come to praise God's holy name.

One: Open wide your hearts in this time of worship!

All: We lift our hearts to God with thanks and praise.

Praise song – The River is Here

Prayer For Adoration and Confession

Holy and gracious God, source of life and love, we gather in your presence to wonder at the beauty and complexity of all you have made, acknowledging how small and insignificant we are, each on our own. Yet you love us with a promise that gives us significance, and restores our purpose in the midst of the creation you love. When we are overcome by forces around us, you speak words of peace. When trouble or sorrow sets in, you give us the strength we need to persevere in our witness to your love. In this time of worship, O God, we remember all you have been, all you are and all you will be; offering you all praise and honour, love and loyalty, with our lips and with our lives to the end of our days.

Mighty and Merciful God, source of hope and wholeness, we confess that we fail you far too often. You call us to serve in the footsteps of Jesus, but we look to our own interests first. You call us to love our neighbours, but we are so good at finding fault in others and withholding our love. You call us to do justice and care for the vulnerable, but we prefer to be silent rather than take a stand for those at risk. Forgive us. Open wide our hearts to our neighbours in need, as we put our trust in your mercy—for us and for them.

This time, we come to you in prayer that you taught us how to pray: (The Lord's 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.**

Words of Assurance

Sisters and brothers in Christ at St. Andrew's, The mercy of our God is from everlasting to everlasting. Hear and believe the good news of the gospel. In Jesus Christ, God's generous love reaches out to embrace us. In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven and set free to begin again. Give thanks for God's generosity and share it with your neighbours.

Prayer for Illumination: BOP #64 – Be still and know that I am God

Scripture: Luke 15:11-32

11 Then Jesus said, "There was a man who had two sons. 12 The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.' So he divided his property between them. 13 A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. 14 When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. 15 So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. 16 He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. 17 But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! 18 I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands."' 20 So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. 21 Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' 22 But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. 23 And get the fatted calf and kill it,

and let us eat and celebrate; 24 for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate. 25 "Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. 26 He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. 27 He replied, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.' 28 Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. 29 But he answered his father, 'Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. 30 But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!' 31 Then the father said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. 32 But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.'"

"This is the word of the Lord / Thanks be to God."

SERMON: Father's Love

Today's sermon title is "The Father's Love."

In this long passage, there are three people. The father, older son, and younger son. One day, the younger son came to his father. **V12, "Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me."** This is, "Father, when you die, I will be getting some inheritance. Can I have mine now?"

This father in the story is a bit odd. Think about it, if your child comes to you and says, "give me my inheritance which I will be getting when you die." How would you feel? Would you give it to your child?

This father thinks out of the box for some reason.

The father gave inheritance to the little one, as well as the older son. First, the Bible spotlights the younger son. He spent all his money and came back begging to his father to hire him as one of the servants.

So, hungry and poor, he came back home. He walked slowly because he was hungry and tired. And he was repeating practicing what he was to say to his father when he encounters him.

"Father I have sinned against heaven and before you." (x 2)

V20-22, "20 So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. 21 Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' 22 But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet.'"

The father noticed his son from far off. What does this mean? He was waiting for his son every day. He was watching far away from his house to see whether his son is coming back. He let his son do what he desired, but he cared for him in his own way, with longingness and patience in compassion and love and trust.

Also, imagine the scene, the father meets the son. The son meets the father. The son murmurs what he practiced. "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you."

"Stop saying that!! I need to talk to my servants!!" "Hey you, QUICKLY!!! Bring this and that

for my son!! My son is back!!” The father does not listen to his son’s apology. You came back safe and sound, and that is good enough, my son, my love.

That’s the father’s love. If you are far off from God, God is waiting for you to come to his arms.

On the other hand, the older son was on the way home from work. He heard loud noise from his house. He learned that his brother came back and the father was holding a big party. He even killed a fatted calf. Wow! V28, when he heard the news, **“he became angry and refused to go in.”**

WHY? The older son envied his younger brother. The older son was very obedient to his father, unlike his brother. The young son did whatever he wanted to do. He asked inheritance to his father when he was still alive and he went off to far away country. He did not take any family responsibilities. All the works and pressure came upon the older brother. He worked hard. And he did not enjoy his freedom of being son. His self-identity was a slave to his father. V29, listen to what he complains to his father, **“Listen (Father)! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends.”**

But, remember, when the *younger* son asked for inheritance, the father **divided his property between them**. So, officially, the older son was able to enjoy them, his own possessions. But, his mind was not free.

But, look at what father does to his older son. V28, **“Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him.”**

The father was very very happy and thankful right now because his younger son came back. But, at the same time, he was very sad because his older son could not accept his sonship. He treated himself as one of his father’s slaves.

The father is begging to his older son in the middle of the celebration party of his younger son’s coming back. He is trying to restore the sonship of the older son.

The works of parents are endless. It’s like God working for us all the time. The older and younger sons are too extreme. One has too much freedom and the other is like a slave. The relationships the father has with his sons show our relationship with our God. What’s your relationship like with your God?

The younger son left the father’s love and came back. Now, he came back home as well as he came back to the love of his father with his heart. Now he knows the Father’s love. The restoration began in the heart of the younger son. Are you far away from our Father God? Then, look at this younger son and come back to the Father. His arms are open wide for you and he is waiting for you.

On the other hand, the older son was thought to be with the father all the time, but his heart was never with him. His body was there but he never experienced the love of the father. Those who are always in church, and if you are feeling resentment and feeling suppression, no freedom, then you are like the older son. Take off your burdens. Lay them down before the feet of our loving Father God. Like the father in the story, our Father God is begging us to lay down our burdens.

And he is inviting us to celebrate the joy of sonship, daughter-ship, the freedom as the children of God.

On this Father's day, let us thank to our fathers. They might be a little awkward in expressing love, but they do have love. ☺ At the same time, remember our Father God, like the father in the story today, God is trying to earn our hearts. He is powerful and he can do everything he wants, but he begs us to come back to him. What are we that the Creator of the whole universe is desperate for? Our Father God is desperate for us. Let us open our hearts and be embraced by our Father God.

Let us pray.

Loving Father God, we thank you for your love. How can you love us so much? You allow us our own wants, yet you patiently wait for us, trusting us to come back. You lower yourself. You are mighty and powerful, but before us, you lower down to us trying to earn our hearts. Why are we so important to you! We thank you for your amazing love for each and every one of us. Help us accept your love with our whole beings and be confident because we are your children. Thank you and be praised. In Jesus' precious and powerful name, we pray. Amen.

The Lord's Supper – Communion

Jesus said: I am the bread of life. Those who come to me will never be hungry, and those who believe in me will never be thirsty. No one who comes to me will I drive away. Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread. So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God.

*(Great Prayer of Thanksgiving:) (Please say **BOLD** print together)*

L: The Lord be with you. **P: And also, with you.**

L: Lift up your hearts. **P: We lift them to the Lord.**

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **P: It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

L: God of grace, blessed are you! For by your mercy, you have given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and that does not fade away. Mighty God, heavenly Sovereign, we praise you. With angels and archangels and all the company of heaven, we worship and adore you as **we lift our hearts in joyful praise.**

(Sanctus) Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might, Heaven and earth are full of Your glory, Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

L: Faithful God, we offer you our praise and thanks as we return to you these holy gifts of bread and wine. Remembering our Lord's command to take and eat, we ponder the mystery of his promise that in this meal we are joined to him and to one another as a holy people uniting heaven and earth. We offer you our praise and thanks for Jesus Christ, who took flesh and lived among us, was baptized for our sins, taught us your way of truth, loved us in our lovelessness and died that we may have life. And now, O God, we celebrate with great joy the resurrection of our Lord, his presence with us in this feast, and his promise of a new creation, **as we proclaim the mystery of faith:**

P: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

L: Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honour are yours, almighty God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Breaking of the BREAD and Pouring the WINE

When we break the bread, it is a sharing in the body of Christ. (BREAD)

“This is the body of Christ broken for you.” (Let us take it)

When we bless the cup, it is a sharing in the blood of Christ (CUP)

“This is the blood of Christ shed for you.” (Let us drink it)

Prayer after Communion:

God of grace and love, we praise and worship you! We give all our hearts to you in thanksgiving for your love and your grace upon us. How deep and how strong is your love. You saved us from death and you gave us life with your own life. Thank you. We will remember your love and take your presence through the sacrifice of your body and blood for us.

We thank you for our new elders. Last week, finally, we were able to ordain our new elders and induct them along with one returning elder. Now our session got stronger and have more energy and power. As our session members listen and discern your voice, provide them discerning wisdom and courage to obediently follow your ways. As the session takes care of your church, let all the congregants support them and respect them and love them and pray for them. So, together, let us be good stewards of your holy church.

Also, thank you for the vaccine, we were able to gather outside the church for the first time since last year March. We are not too sure whether we can do in-person worship every week, but help us gather in person more often. So, we can finally interact more, get to know each other more, pray for each other more, and love each other more.

We pray for India and world's crisis due to Corona virus. Thankfully Ontario is doing a good job giving as much as vaccines to people in a speedy manner, so the rate is dropping for confirmed cases. Yet, there are still people who are suffering with COVID 19 symptoms and fear of it. God, please help them. Give strength to them, so they can overcome the virus. And give peace to their minds. There are so many factors make us afraid. Let us fix our eyes on you alone, and find peace and confidence from you.

In our congregation, there are people who are sick and recovering from their illness. This time, Lord, place your hands upon them and let your healing power flow upon them. Holy Spirit, be in their hearts, speak your love for them and give them confidence in their faith.

Thank you for your presence among us as we worship you. Protect us through the week. We will carry your presence wherever we go and whatever we do. In Jesus' precious and powerful name, we pray. Amen.

Invitation to the offering: This is the time for offering. The scriptures teach us of the courage it can take to serve God. Giving takes courage, too. So give to God as you are able, trusting that God will honour your courage and generosity, blessing your gifts with the power of the Holy Spirit. Let us pray.

Offering prayer:

God of promise and perseverance, we offer our gifts with thankful hearts, grateful for your patience with us as your purposes unfold in us and among us. Bless our gifts with the Spirit's power so that your church can accomplish your purposes in our community with courage and compassion for the sake of Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Praise song – How Deep The Father's Love For Us

Now, it is the time for us to be sent to the world. Our Father God loves us with his everything. Let us remember his love and have him in our hearts. Happy Father's Day to all fathers, and Happy Father's Day to our heavenly Father God.

Benediction

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, And the Love of God, And the intimate fellowship of the Holy Spirit, Be with us all, now and always. Amen.

Ponder Upon Questions:

1. Am I like the older son or the younger son?
2. What is my experience of God's love?
3. What is the one thing I can do to come back to the love of our Father God?