

Fourth Sunday after Pentecost Sunday, July 02, 2017

The Collect: Almighty God, you have built your Church upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone: Grant us so to be joined together in unity of spirit by their teaching, that we may be made a holy temple acceptable to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Old Testament: Genesis 22:1-14 read from the New American Standard Bible

Now it came about after these things, that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." He said, "Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you." So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him and Isaac his son; and he split wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. On the third day Abraham raised his eyes and saw the place from a distance. Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey, and I and the lad will go over there; and we will worship and return to you." Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son, and he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So the two of them walked on together. Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." And he said, "Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" Abraham said, "God will provide for Himself the lamb for the burnt offering, my son." So the two of them walked on together.

Then they came to the place of which God had told him; and Abraham built the altar there and arranged the wood, and bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." He said, "Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me." Then Abraham raised his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him a ram caught in the thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram and offered him up for a burnt offering in the place of his

son. Abraham called the name of that place The Lord Will Provide, as it is said to this day, "In the mount of the Lord it will be provided."

The Word of the Lord

Psalm 13 read from The Episcopal Church Book of Common Prayer

1 How long, O Lord? will you forget me for ever? * how long will you hide your face from me?
2 How long shall I have perplexity in my mind, and grief in my heart, day after day? * how long shall my enemy triumph over me?
3 Look upon me and answer me, O Lord my God; * give light to my eyes, lest I sleep in death;
4 Lest my enemy say, "I have prevailed over him," * and my foes rejoice that I have fallen.
5 But I put my trust in your mercy; * my heart is joyful because of your saving help.
6 I will sing to the Lord, for he has dealt with me richly; * I will praise the Name of the Lord Most High.

Epistle: Romans 6:12-23 read from the New Century Version Bible

So, do not let sin control your life here on earth so that you do what your sinful self wants to do. Do not offer the parts of your body to serve sin, as things to be used in doing evil. Instead, offer yourselves to God as people who have died and now live. Offer the parts of your body to God to be used in doing good. Sin will not be your master, because you are not under law but under God's grace.

So what should we do? Should we sin because we are under grace and not under law? No! Surely you know that when you give yourselves like slaves to obey someone, then you are really slaves of that person. The person you obey is your master. You can follow sin, which brings spiritual death, or you can obey God, which makes you right with him. In the past you were slaves to sin—sin controlled you. But thank God, you fully obeyed the things that you were taught. You were made free from sin, and now you are slaves to goodness. I use this example because this is hard for you to understand. In the past you offered the parts of your body to be slaves to sin and evil; you lived only for evil. In the same way now you must give yourselves to be slaves of goodness. Then you will live only for God.

In the past you were slaves to sin, and goodness did not control you. You did evil things, and now you are ashamed of them. Those things only bring death. But now you are free from sin and have become slaves of God. This brings you a life that is only for God, and this gives you life forever. The payment for sin is death. But God gives us the free gift of life forever in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Word of the Lord

Gospel: Matthew 10:40-42 read from the New International Version Bible

“Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. Whoever welcomes a prophet as a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward, and whoever welcomes a righteous person as a righteous person will receive a righteous person’s reward. And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward.”

The Gospel of the Lord

Closing Prayer: On July 6th we celebrate the life of Jan Hus Priest and Martyr

Jan Hus was born in Bohemia (now part of the Czech Republic) in about 1369. He was a priest who, influenced by the writings of John Wyclif, became leader of the Bohemian reform movement, which called for a return to Scripture and living out the word of God in one's life. As preacher at Bethlehem Chapel in Prague, he talked to the people in their native language. Hundreds gathered every day to hear his call for personal and institutional reform.

Clerics he had offended had him exiled from Prague, but he continued his ministry through the written word. Hus took the radical step of appealing directly to Christ rather than to the hierarchy for the justification of his stance.

When the Council of Constance opened in 1414, Hus traveled there, hoping to clear his name of charges of heresy. Hus had been given a pledge of safe conduct from the Emperor, but his enemies persuaded council officials to imprison him on the grounds that “promises made to

heretics need not be kept.” Although several leaders of the Council of Constance were in favor of moderate church reform, the council's prime objective was the resolution of the Great Western Schism, which had produced three rival popes at the same time. The council therefore tried to secure a speedy recantation and submission from Hus. He maintained that the charges against him were false or twisted versions of his teachings, and he could not recant opinions he had never held. Faced with an ultimatum to recant or die, Hus chose the latter. As he approached the stake on July 6th, 1415, he refused a last attempt to get him to recant and said: “The principal intention of my preaching and of all my other acts or writings was solely that I might turn men from sin. And in that truth of the gospel that I wrote, taught, and preached in accordance with the sayings and expositions of the holy doctors, I am willing gladly to die today.”

His death did not end the movement, and the Bohemian reformation continued. Hus influenced Martin Luther's reforming ideas. The Moravian Church traces its origins to Hus. Hus' rousing assertion “Truth will conquer!” is the motto of the Czech Republic today.

Let us Pray: Faithful God, you gave Jan Hus the courage to confess your truth and recall your Church to the image of Christ: Enable us, inspired by his example, to bear witness against corruption and never cease to pray for our enemies, that we may prove faithful followers of our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**