All You Need is Love

John Lennon penned this now ubiquitous song in 1967 – in the midst of the “Summer of Love.” Its message can be seen as profound or simplistic, depending on one’s point of view. It was originally created for the first live, international satellite television production, called Our World, and in fact it closed the broadcast, which attracted the largest television audience ever up to that date. The band was asked, “to provide a song that could be easily understood by everyone, using basic English terms.” It seems they succeeded. [Here's a link to a colorized version of the original black & white broadcast.]

John the gospel writer has a similar message for us this week [John 15:9-17]. In this section of the farewell discourse at the Last Supper, Jesus reminds the disciples of the simple message of love for one another. What message does this carry for us in this moment? Jesus speaks of love, joy, friendship, and bearing “fruit that will last.” At once simple and profound.

Welcome to St. Paul’s, where we know that love is all you need.

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.

Readings

Acts 10:44-48

While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles, for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter said, “Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?” So he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they invited him to stay for several days.

Psalm 98

1 Sing to the LORD a new song, *
   for he has done marvelous things.
2 With his right hand and his holy arm *
   has he won for himself the victory.
3 The LORD has made known his victory; *
   his righteousness has he openly shown in the sight of the nations.
4 He remembers his mercy and faithfulness to the house of Israel, *
   and all the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God.
5 Shout with joy to the LORD, all you lands; *
   lift up your voice, rejoice, and sing.
6 Sing to the LORD with the harp, *
   with the harp and the voice of song.
7 With trumpets and the sound of the horn *
   shout with joy before the King, the LORD.
8 Let the sea make a noise and all that is in it, *
   the lands and those who dwell therein.
9 Let the rivers clap their hands, *
   and let the hills ring out with joy before the LORD, when he comes to judge the earth.
10 In righteousness shall he judge the world *
   and the peoples with equity.
1 John 5:1-6
Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the parent loves the child. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. For the love of God is this, that we obey his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome, for whatever is born of God conquers the world. And this is the victory that conquers the world, our faith. Who is it that conquers the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ, not with the water only but with the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one that testifies, for the Spirit is the truth.

John 15:9-17
Jesus said to his disciples, “As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.”

Worship Teams (If you exchange shifts with someone, please notify the Church Office by Thursday morning at office@stpaulsstockbridge.org.)

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<th>Today, May 9</th>
<th>Next Sunday, May 16</th>
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<tr>
<td>Celebrant:</td>
<td>The Rev. Jane Tillman</td>
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<td>Preacher:</td>
<td>The Rev. Sam Smith</td>
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<td>Usher:</td>
<td>Kendra MacLeod</td>
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<td>Reader: Duncan Pollock</td>
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We are honored to have Bonnie Nordoff playing keyboard for this service.

Parish Prayer List

- People we pray for on Sundays: Cecilia, Thelma, Libby, Cynthia, Tony
- Long-term prayer list: Piers, Katrina, Khali, George, Jeff, David, Doug, Barbara, ZsuZsa, Charles, Tom, Rich, Ronnie, John, George, Christy, Michael, Karen
- Thanksgiving for the baptism on May 1 of Claire Arlene Ruth Littlefield, daughter of Courtney and Robert Littlefield.
- Our partners at Grace Church, Great Barrington and their priest Libby; Christ Trinity Episcopal-Lutheran, Sheffield and their priest Erik; the Austen Riggs community and the Riverbrook Residence; victims of violence, abuse, persecution and disaster at home and abroad; those impacted by the pandemic
- Outreach Ministries of the Week: St. Paul’s Children’s Center
- Diocesan Cycle of Prayer: St. Mark’s Leominster
- Anglican Cycle of Prayer: The Anglican Church of Kenya
- Birthdays: Darryl Lafferty (9th) and Scott Muir (12th)

For more information about what is going on in the St. Paul’s and the wider Episcopal communities visit our website, www.stpaulsstockbridge.org.