

Dangerous Hope

In The Hunger Games, the dystopian country's President asks the chief Games-maker, the one charged with creating an entertaining and barbaric spectacle, why there must be a winner. His answer? Hope. He says that, "Hope is the only thing more powerful than fear." But he also cautions the dictator: "A little hope," he explains, "is effective; a lot of hope is dangerous."

I am intrigued by the idea that we might become so filled with hope as to be dangerous to those forces in our world that are bent on destruction. Could an abundance of hope motivate us to truly love and care for our neighbor? Or see clearer the humanity of each person? Or take better care of the earth?

Today's gospel is all about hope. Jesus tells parables about seeds to proclaim the hope that is inherent in God's way of love. And yet, the stories don't necessarily go where we expect. Welcome to St. Paul's, where today we will look at the danger—and the opportunity—of hope.

Music We are honored to have Doug Schmolze playing guitar for the 10:00 AM service.

Collect

Keep, O Lord, your household the Church in your steadfast faith and love, that through your grace we may proclaim your truth with boldness, and minister your justice with compassion; for the sake of our Savior Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Readings

1 Samuel 15:34 – 16:13

Samuel went to Ramah; and Saul went up to his house in Gibeah of Saul. Samuel did not see Saul again until the day of his death, but Samuel grieved over Saul. And the LORD was sorry that he had made Saul king over Israel.

The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons." Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me." And the LORD said, "Take a heifer with you, and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.' Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you." Samuel did what the LORD commanded, and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, "Do you come peaceably?" He said, "Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, “Surely the LORD’s anointed is now before the LORD.” But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the LORD does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.” Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. He said, “Neither has the LORD chosen this one.” Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, “Neither has the LORD chosen this one.” Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, “The LORD has not chosen any of these.” Samuel said to Jesse, “Are all your sons here?” And he said, “There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep.” And Samuel said to Jesse, “Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here.” He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. The LORD said, “Rise and anoint him; for this is the one.” Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

Psalm 138

- 1 May the LORD answer you in the day of trouble, *
the Name of the God of Jacob defend you;
- 2 Send you help from his holy place *
and strengthen you out of Zion;
- 3 Remember all your offerings *
and accept your burnt sacrifice;
- 4 Grant you your heart’s desire *
and prosper all your plans.
- 5 We will shout for joy at your victory and triumph in the Name of our God; *
may the LORD grant all your requests.
- 6 Now I know that the LORD gives victory to his anointed; *
he will answer him out of his holy heaven, with the victorious strength of his right hand.
- 7 Some put their trust in chariots and some in horses, *
but we will call upon the Name of the LORD our God.
- 8 They collapse and fall down, *
but we will arise and stand upright.
- 9 O LORD, give victory to the king *
and answer us when we call.

2 Corinthians 5:6-17

We are always confident; even though we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord—for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yes, we do have confidence, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. For all of us must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense for what has been done in the body, whether good or evil.

Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we try to persuade others; but we ourselves are well known to God, and I hope that we are also well known to your consciences. We are not commending ourselves to you again, but giving you an opportunity to boast about us, so that you may be able to answer those who boast in outward appearance and not in the heart. For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. For the love of Christ urges us on, because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died. And he died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them. From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!

Mark 4:26-34

Jesus said, “The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come.”

He also said, “With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.”

With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it; he did not speak to them except in parables, but he explained everything in private to his disciples.

Greeters/Ushers Needed

We are in need of greeters/ushers for our 10:00 a.m. in-person outdoor services on June 27 and throughout the summer. If you are able to serve please contact Matt Fillio, mcfillio@yahoo.com.

Alive with the Spirit ONLINE Retreat

June 12th, 9:30 a.m. to 12 Noon

This **online** retreat with Margaret Bullitt-Jonas is co-sponsored by The Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts and The Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts. Open to all at no cost.

Jesus calls us to fullness of life (John 10:10), yet many of us feel anything but fully alive – we may feel melancholy, distracted, anxious, or numb. In this morning retreat we will explore ways of prayer that make us available to the healing and enlivening power of the Spirit. The first part of the retreat will focus on our inner lives; the second part will focus on how our outer lives can create the conditions for experiencing what Joseph Campbell called “the rapture of being alive.” Our time together will include presentations and guided meditation, with options for solitary reflection and small group conversation. If possible, please bring a **candle, Bible, and Book of Common Prayer**.

To register visit

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcvcqrpzwrHNXeCqgIc6YRYpEPfJn3t0Ak>.

New Concert Series Kicks Off in Sheffield

It is finally time once again for sharing live music with friends, family, and neighbors! Featuring the world class string quartet *Archi al Fresco* and William Hudgins, principal clarinetist for the Boston Symphony Orchestra as guest, Christ Trinity Church's "Lich Gate Productions" begins their new, outdoor concert series in the Sheffield Park on June 12 at 4 p.m. Reserve your tickets under the pavilion for \$35 or on the lawn for \$15. Email concerts@christtrinitychurch.org or call (413) 441-6446 for more information and tickets or order tickets online at www.christtrinitychurch.org/store/p9/Lich_Gate_Concerts.html.



Diocesan Morning Prayer on Juneteenth

June 19th at 10:00 a.m. ONLINE

Join us as we celebrate the day when freedom finally reached the last enslaved persons in America. All people of faith might mark this particular moment in our history mindful that the sin of white supremacy continues to impact Black lives in our time. This diocesan liturgy is being planned by the [Beloved Community Commission](#) as an entry point for deeper engagement with the story and to gather us all for prayer on this great day. Our presider will be **the Rt. Rev. Douglas J. Fisher**.

Join via YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCv7jWa-XhOJDS45WbiHVFwQ>) and FaceBook Watch (<https://www.facebook.com/watch/EpiscopalWMA/>).

Worship Teams

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

Today, June 13

Celebrant: The Rev. Jane Tillman
Preacher: The Rev. Sam Smith
Usher: Jean Rousseau
Reader: Jean Rousseau

Next Sunday, June 20

Celebrant: The Rev. Sam Smith
Preacher: The Rev. Jane Tillman
Usher: Jean Rousseau
Reader: Kendra MacLeod

Parish Prayer List

- People we pray for on Sundays: **Cecilia, Thelma, Cynthia, Danielle, Charles**
- Long-term prayer list: **Piers, Katrina, Khali, George, David, Doug, Barbara, ZsuZsa, Tom, Rich, Ronnie, John, George, Christy, Michael, Karen**
- **Prayers for the repose of the soul of Jeff Roosa**
- 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: **Christ Memorial Church, North Brookfield**
- Anglican Cycle of Prayer: **The Church of the Province of Myanmar**
- Birthdays: **Chris Marsden & Barbara McCue** (16th)
- Anniversaries: **Cecilia Jones & John Muller** (17th), **Libby & Jim Wade** (19th)

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