

Sermon followed by Service - June 1, 2025 - Acts 1:12-26

“Sit still and wait.” Not easy, is it? We’ve been training and practicing from before we were born. Waiting inside and kicking. Then when we were born, we added screaming to our kicking. We were hungry. Mom whispered, “Wait just a moment,” and what did we do? Did we sit still and wait? Not a chance. Some years later, Dad made that big mistake; he bought that video game thing; he thought it would be good family fun, until he said: “Sit still and wait your turn.” Then what happened? We didn’t sit still and wait, did we? Then when we got googly-eyed in love, and we didn’t get the letter, the call, the text, the smile we were waiting for, how easy was it to just sit still and wait? Now when we get old, when the Dr. Office receptionist says: “Sit and Wait,” and then the nurse says, “Sit and wait,” that’s just the start, isn’t it? Then it’s sit and wait for the tests, sit and wait for the results, sit and wait for the follow-up, and then sit and wait on hold with the insurance company for how long? Sit and wait - we get a lot of practice, don’t we? And it’s not easy, is it?

In our lesson, it’s time to wait. Now Jesus doesn’t tell his disciples to “Sit still and wait,” but he does tell them to “Stay put [stay in Jerusalem] and wait.” And what do they do? They could have done the “brother” thing and gotten into fights and arguments with each other (they had plenty of experience with that). They could have done the fret and worry thing (and they were pretty good at that). They could have given up and gone off and done their own thing (“I’ve been waiting for this guy for three years and he’s still always telling us to ‘wait’”). Instead,

what does Luke tell us? They did the hard thing; they stayed and they waited. They didn't know how long they would have to wait. They didn't know what was coming after their wait. Yes, Jesus had told them he would send them his Holy Spirit, but Jesus had also made it clear that trouble was coming.

When you're waiting and waiting and you don't know what's coming, what happens? It can be so easy to get persnickety with each other, to get demanding of each other, to fret and worry, to give up, to get distracted and join the world in their distractions, to live distracted instead of waiting with the heart and mind of Jesus. But the apostles and those with them, they didn't do the easy thing. Instead, they stayed and waited.

And they show us how to wait - **“They all joined together constantly in prayer.”** What do you think they prayed? Maybe a little bit of “How long, O Lord?” Perhaps some “What a Friend We Have in Jesus.” Or, “Lord, I believe, help my unbelief.” Maybe some “Now Thank We All Our God!” Or “Come, Holy Spirit, and kindle in us the fire of your love!” What else might they have prayed? I imagine a whole lot of “Take My Life and Let it Be Consecrated, Lord, to Thee!”

We're not told what they prayed, but we are told how they prayed. They kept on praying; they weren't one and done; Jesus was giving them time to pray, so they kept on praying. Great reminder, isn't it? We get to use our waiting time as praying time. When I'm late, and I'm stuck waiting at the red light, or for the train, or in the construction zone, instead of _____, Jesus is giving me time to pray. When the world around me is late,

instead of thinking how they are making me wait, Jesus is giving me time to wait, Jesus is giving me time to pray. When I'm waiting for whatever might come next, instead of grumping and grouching about the wait, Jesus is giving us time to pray.

And so the apostles and all who were with them prayed. How? They prayed "together," "with one mind." How did that happen? I don't think it happened by accident. I imagine they shared their fears and worries with each other. I imagine they shared their hopes with each other. Sitting and waiting - they didn't have a TV in the room ... sitting and waiting - they didn't have phones in their hands ... sitting and waiting with each other they got to talk with each other; they got to listen to each other; they got to be there for each other. Now, what do we all know? People sharing their hopes and fears with each other doesn't necessarily get people on the same page, sometimes it just gets us into a fight. So the apostles must have had something else to bring them together and hold them together.

What was that? Jesus and the Word of Jesus. I'm not just making that up. In the next part of our lesson, did you notice how Peter brought the people together? Peter didn't just say: "I think," or "I hope," but Peter pointed to Scripture - "This situation we're in, God knew about it long before we did. This situation we're in, God had a plan for it long before us. This situation we're in, I don't need to tell you what I think or I hope or I say, because with this situation we're in - this is what God says." "This is what God says" brought the apostles together. "This is what God says" is what brings and keeps us together. And when we fill our hearts and minds with "This is what God

says,” “This is what God says” can shape our hearts and our prayers so that we pray together in a way that we’re blessed together.

What does all that mean for us? When it’s our turn to sit and wait, we can obsess over how long we have to wait, we can wrap ourselves up in our own thinking - we can stoke our fears and worries with all that can go wrong, we can stroke our egos and get all judgmental at the world around us because they don’t think like we do ... when it’s our turn to sit and wait, we can distract ourselves by joining the world in its distracted living. (In Bible Class we’ll talk about this - what is the difference between purposeful distraction that is good and godly? And empty distraction that is neither good nor godly?)

Or, we can let our lesson show us a better way to sit and wait. Sit and wait together with each other. Sit and wait together with Jesus. Pray with each other and fill each other with Jesus.

Did you notice what kind of Jesus we have in our lesson? Did you notice what kind of Jesus we get to share? An Easter Jesus! The Jesus who faced the worst of this world and came out on top! The Jesus who faced death and came out alive! The Jesus who faced God’s curse and came out blessed!

In our waiting times, it doesn’t matter what we’re waiting for, we don’t need to fret and worry, we have Jesus as Lord - our wait isn’t to see what trouble will do; our wait is to see what Jesus will do. In our waiting times, when trouble and guilt have us wondering what God has in store for us, waiting for the other

shoe to drop, waiting for God to drop the hammer on us, with Jesus we aren't waiting for judgment, with Jesus and his cross we have forgiveness, so with Jesus we aren't waiting for payback, we're waiting for redemption and deliverance. What does that mean? In our waiting times, when "who knows when death will overtake me," who knows when judgment day will come, with Jesus, we don't need to be afraid of death or the judgment, we have Jesus coming for us to take us to be with him in heaven. That's right! Our wait in this world isn't just for death; our wait is for heaven! Keeping our Easter Jesus in front us - it sure gives a whole different feel to our waiting times, doesn't it?

Did you notice how I managed to skip over our lesson's most confusing verses? Or how I managed to skip over our lesson's most distracting verses? Or how I managed to skip over our lesson's most interesting verses? Don't worry; just wait - for Family Bible Hour. Amen.

May 31 & June 1, 2025

THE SERVICE

IN OUR WORLD TODAY ... we sit and wait. But that's not all. Our world trains us to be distracted, to distract ourselves from good, godly, purposeful waiting. How does the world distract you from good, godly, purposeful waiting?

IN OUR WORSHIP TODAY ... Christ and his church show us good, godly, purposeful waiting - the kind of waiting that God blesses!

OPENING HYMN

"With the Lord Begin Your Task"

Hymn 776

With the Lord begin your task; Jesus will direct it.
For his aid and counsel ask; Jesus will perfect it.
Ev'ry morn with Jesus rise, and, when day is ended,
in his name then close your eyes; be to him commended.

Let each day begin with prayer, praise and adoration.
On the Lord cast ev'ry care; he is your salvation.
Morning, evening, and at night Jesus will be near you,
save you from the tempter's might, with his presence cheer you.

With your Savior at your side foes need not alarm you;
in his promises confide and no ill can harm you.
All your trust and hope repose in the mighty Master,
who in wisdom truly knows how to stem disaster.

If your task is thus begun with the Savior's blessing,
safely then your course will run, naught your soul distressing.
Good will follow ev'rywhere while you here must wander;
you at last the joy will share in the mansions yonder.

INVOCATION

In the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

CW 189

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves
and the truth is not in us.

**If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just
and will forgive us our sins
and purify us from all unrighteousness.**

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

Holy God, gracious Father,

I am sinful by nature

and have sinned against you in my thoughts, words, and actions.

I have not loved you with my whole heart;

I have not loved others as I should.

I deserve your punishment both now and forever.

But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins

with his innocent suffering and death.

Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

LORD, HAVE MERCY - Sung

CW 190

In peace let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord. **Amen.**

GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST - SUNG

CW 191

Refrain: Glory to God in the highest, glory to God, and peace to his people on earth, and peace to his people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. You are seated at the right hand of the Father; receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in the glory of God the Father. Amen. *Refrain*

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, your Son our Savior was taken up in glory and intercedes for us at your right hand. Through your living and abiding Word, give us hearts to know him and faith to follow where he has gone; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

FIRST READING

Acts 1:12–26

Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk from the city. When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

In those days Peter stood up among the believers (a group numbering about a hundred and twenty) and said, "Brothers and sisters, the Scripture had to be fulfilled in which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through David concerning Judas, who served as guide for those who arrested Jesus. He was one of our number and shared in our ministry."

(With the payment he received for his wickedness, Judas bought a field; there he fell headlong, his body burst open and all his intestines spilled out. Everyone in Jerusalem heard about this, so they called that field in their language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.)

"For," said Peter, "it is written in the Book of Psalms:

" 'May his place be deserted;
let there be no one to dwell in it,'

and,

" 'May another take his place of leadership.'"

Therefore it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus was living among us, beginning from John's baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection."

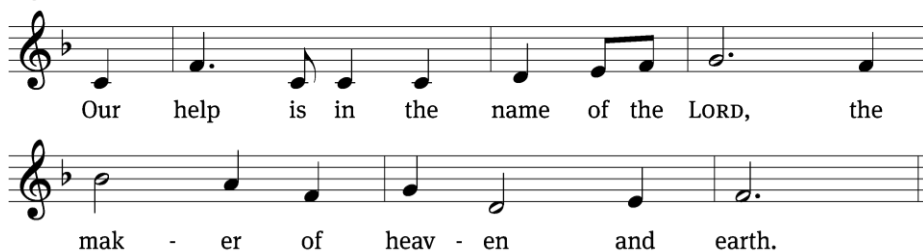
So they nominated two men: Joseph called Barsabbas (also known as Justus) and Matthias. Then they prayed, "Lord, you know everyone's heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen to take over this apostolic ministry, which Judas left to go where he belongs." Then they cast lots, and the lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the eleven apostles.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM OF THE DAY

Psalm 124A

Refrain



Tone



If the LORD had not been / on our side
when people at- / tacked us,
they would have swallowed / us alive
when their anger flared a- / gainst us;

the flood would have en- / gulfed us,
the torrent would have swept / over us,
the raging / waters
would have swept / us away. *Refrain*

Praise be / to the LORD,
who has not let us be torn / by their teeth.
We have escaped like a bird from the / fowler's snare;
the snare has been broken, and we / have escaped.

**Glory be to the Father and / to the Son
and to the Holy / Spirit,
as it was in the be- / ginning,
is now, and will be forever. / Amen. *Refrain***

SECOND READING

1 Peter 4:12–17; 5:6–11

Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name.

For it is time for judgment to begin with God's household; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God? Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Alleluia.

GOSPEL

John 17:13-19

"I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them. I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise be to you, O Christ!**

HYMN OF THE DAY

"The Son of God, Our Christ"

Hymn 738

The Son of God, our Christ, the Word, the way,
shared human life and toiled throughout the day;
from common folk he called his friends to be
coworkers in his sacred ministry.

In ev'ry test, in trials manifold,
these servants witnessed, by their faith made bold;
and with the gifts and talents which they brought,
the Church was founded and God's message taught.

Today, as then, Christ summons us to dare
to follow boldly and his work to share,
declaring to the world his holy name
and showing mercy to the sick and lame.

In city street, in town, or on the soil,
may each serve Christ in faithful daily toil,
and in each thought and kindly word and deed,
obey Christ's call and go where he shall lead.

Where'er we find our witness should be made,
whate'er our task, the Lord will be our aid,
and we will gladly give for him our best
and find each task divinely sent and blessed.

SERMON

Acts 1:12-26

NICENE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate. He suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

OFFERING PRAYER

Majestic Lord, accept our gifts which we bring to your altar. Grant that we may have joy in our giving. But more importantly, grant that our hearts and our gifts are the kind that bring joy to you. **Amen.**

OFFERING

If you prefer to give online, the code at the right will take you to our Online Giving page. We invite our online givers to join in our offering with an "I Give Online" card in the pew racks.



PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Loving God and Lord, you created the universe that surrounds us and the globe on which we live. You control all things through your Son, who sits at your right hand in glory.

Comfort us with the promise of your eternal presence.

Give your Word power as it works in our hearts and minds. Clear away our confusion, and demolish our doubts. Send your Spirit to strengthen both our confidence in your promises and our desire to live according to your will.

Take away our love of sinning, and restore us each day by your grace.

The signs of the times warn us that the end of time is near. Protect us from scoffers who sneer at your truth. Spare us and Christians around the world from all forms of hate and persecution.

Give us courage to carry the cross with patience and joy.

Instill in the hearts of our children a desire to follow you as they prepare for future days. Help them distinguish between what is passing and what is eternal, between instant thrills and lasting joy. Encourage more young people to prepare for service in the public ministry of the gospel.

Mold us and move us to be good examples for our youth.

Hold in your care, Lord, those who are experiencing physical or emotional pain and all who are afflicted by disease or facing death. [Especially bless . . . *here name the person and the cause of the petition.*] Pour out your compassion on the grieving, and comfort the mourners who miss someone they loved.

Move us to pray for these brothers and sisters and to help when we can.

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

Silent prayer

Whether we pray together or alone, you have promised to hear and answer us. Give us patience to accept your blessings in whatever way you send them. In your love and wisdom, prepare us for the day when you will take us to be with you forever.

Hear us for Jesus' sake. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

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 forever and ever. Amen.

THE SACRAMENT

(Guests, please see our communion practice on page 2.)

(Gluten-free wafers are available; ask Pastor.)

Preface - Sung

CW 199

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

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

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who by his willing sacrifice on the cross took away the sins of the world and by his glorious resurrection restored everlasting life. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY - SUNG

CW 200

Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full, full of your glory. Hosanna, hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna, hosanna in the highest. Hosanna, hosanna in the highest.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my \mathbb{T} body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my \mathbb{T} blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **Amen.**

JESUS, LAMB OF GOD - SUNG

CW 202

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us, grant us peace.

DISTRIBUTION HYMN

"Lord Jesus Christ, You Have Prepared"

Hymn 667

Lord Jesus Christ, you have prepared this feast for our salvation;
it is your body and your blood, and at your invitation
as weary souls, with sin oppressed, we come to you for needed rest,
for comfort, and for pardon.

Although you did to heav'n ascend, where angel hosts are dwelling,
and in your presence they behold your glory, all excelling,
and though your people shall not see your glory and your majesty
till dawns the judgment morning,

Yet, Savior, you are not confined to any habitation,
but you are present ev'rywhere and with your congregation.
Firm as a rock this truth shall stand, unmoved by any daring hand
or subtle craft and cunning.

We eat this bread and drink this cup, your precious Word believing
that your true body and your blood our lips are here receiving.
This Word remains forever true, and there is naught you cannot do,
for you, Lord, are almighty.

Though reason cannot understand, yet faith this truth embraces:
your body, Lord, is even now at once in many places.
I leave to you how this can be; your Word alone suffices me;
I trust its truth unfailing.

Lord, I believe what you have said; help me when doubts assail me.
Remember that I am but dust, and let my faith not fail me.
Your supper in this vale of tears refreshes me and stills my fears
and is my priceless treasure.

Grant that we worthily receive your supper, Lord, our Savior,
and, truly grieving for our sins, may prove by our behavior
that we are thankful for your grace and day by day may run our race,
in holiness increasing.

For your consoling supper, Lord, be praised throughout all ages!
Preserve it, for in ev'ry place the world against it rages.
Grant that this sacrament may be a blessed comfort unto me
when living and when dying.

CLOSING PRAYER

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his mercy endures forever.

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

O God the Father, source of all goodness, in your loving-kindness you sent
your Son to share our humanity. We thank you that through him you have
given us pardon and peace in this Sacrament.

We also pray that you will not forsake us but will rule our hearts and minds by your Holy Spirit so that we willingly serve you day after day; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace. **Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN

“The Head That Once Was Crowned with Thorns”

Hymn 531

The head that once was crowned with thorns is crowned with glory now;
a royal diadem adorns the mighty victor’s brow.

The highest place that heav’n affords is his, is his by right,
the King of kings and Lord of lords and heav’n’s eternal light;

The joy of all who dwell above, the joy of all below
to whom he manifests his love and grants his name to know.

To them the cross, with all its shame, with all its grace, is giv’n;
their name, an everlasting name, their joy, the joy of heav’n.

They suffer with their Lord below, they reign with him above,
their profit and their joy to know the myst’ry of his love.

The cross he bore is life and health, though shame and death to him:
his people’s hope, his people’s wealth, their everlasting theme.

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