



Seventh Sunday of Easter

Holy Eucharist B

21 May 2023

**The Episcopal Church of the
Good Shepherd in Athens, Ohio**

Seeking to know and serve Christ
in loving service to the campus, the
community, and the world.

Today's printed [Order of Worship](#)

This 10:30 service is streamed live. The streaming stops before taking communion out of privacy concerns. Find it on the Church of Good Shepherd's Facebook page [HERE](#).

Lessons

Lessons for Seventh Sunday of Easter
after Ascension Day

New Testament – Acts of the Apostles 1:
6-14

Psalm – 68: 1-10, 33-36 (Sung)

Epistle – I Peter 4: 12-14; 5: 6-11

Gospel – John 17: 1-11

<https://www.lectionarypage.net>



The Collect

O GOD, the King of glory, you have exalted your only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph to your kingdom in heaven: Do not leave us comfortless, but send us your Holy Spirit to strengthen us, and exalt us to that place where our Savior Christ has gone before; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting. Amen.

The Gospel



John 17: 1-11

JESUS LOOKED up to heaven and said, “Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.

“I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.”

Gospel Engagement Question:

What do you notice Jesus praying for?

The Sermon

How to Let Go and Pray Like Jesus

Since today is the last Sunday in the Easter Season, let's look back to the Gospel reading from Easter Sunday, because it was pointing to today's Gospel and how to live as followers of Jesus after his resurrection and ascension.

If you recall, Easter Sunday's Gospel began very early in the morning, when it was still dark, like the creation stories when God made the world and everything in it. In that early morning newness, one woman, Mary Magdalene walked to the tomb where Jesus' dead body had been. Of course, we know when she got there, the tomb was wide open and empty, and she ran to fetch Peter and another disciple, who all ran back to the tomb, where they left Mary alone when they saw it was empty. Angels appeared and talked to Mary, then the Risen Jesus himself appeared and she couldn't recognize him until he called her by her name. It is a wonderful moment. Then Jesus said something that we sometimes struggle to understand because it was Jesus teaching Mary and us how we are to live with the gift of resurrection life.

“Jesus said to her, ‘Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I’m ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’”

Most of the time Jesus words of not holding on to him are interpreted as Jesus telling Mary to restrain herself from physically touching him. Because we often interpret holding someone as a physical embrace like a hug, snuggle, or cradling a baby in our arms. But the phrase may not relate to physical contact, because Jesus also talked about his ascension, which the Church observed on Thursday. This means, Jesus' words are probably more like the now iconic song *Let it Go* the character Ilsa sang in the 2013 Disney movie *Frozen* that many of us have heard, either because of grandchildren, children, or you grew up with it. The song and movie are about how Ilsa let go of her fear of harming others with her magical gift of creating snow and ice so that she could receive the love of her sister and through that love, her gift was transformed into something that made life richer, better, and more magical for her, her family, and her kingdom.

In his way, Jesus was telling Mary it was time to let go of what everyone thought they knew about Jesus so they could receive something richer and deeper than his parables and miracles: resurrection life through the Holy Spirit.

How was Mary supposed to let go? Ilsa got a whole movie full of adventure to figure it out. How can any of us learn to let go of what we thought we knew or understood about Jesus, the church or each other, so that we can receive the

gift of the Holy Spirit which will help us grow closer to Jesus and each other?

That is where today's Gospel comes in; where we find Jesus at the end of his long speech to his disciples the night before his arrest, trial, crucifixion, and resurrection. This speech was Jesus' first steps at letting go of his earthly ministry and his disciples. They were no longer going to be with him all the time. He was no longer going to travel around telling stories and healing people and upsetting the status quo. Things were about to change, and Jesus had to not only let go of the way things had been, but he was also trying to prepare his disciples to do the same.

You might notice Jesus ended his speech with a prayer. A powerful one that reveals Jesus' relationship with God as one of intimate trust, which is why Jesus calls God not father in the patriarchal sense, but Abba, which translates more affectionately, as Poppa, or Daddy.

Biblical scholar and theologian N.T. Wright observed in this prayer Jesus was celebrating that his work on earth had come to its end; he'd done everything God sent him to do. Wright also observed Jesus made a few requests. One was to be exalted, which is not the same thing as being a celebrity. It has to do with God keeping God's promise that the Messiah will be lifted up to be with God so that the new life, or new creation, God promised to send to the earth can begin. It is more about the transition from Jesus' earthly ministry to living with resurrection life in the world. The other request Jesus made was for God to watch over his disciples, who Jesus obviously cared about. It could not have been easy for Jesus to let go, so he turned to God for help.

We often assume letting go means forgetting about someone or something or choosing not to care anymore. But that is not what Jesus was talking about when he told Mary Magdalene not to hold onto him or when he prayed this prayer. Letting go doesn't mean throwing something or someone away. Letting go simply means giving someone or something into God's care. It doesn't mean not loving, it just means relinquishing the obligation of responsibility or managing or attempting to control an outcome, person, ministry, or relationship so that a new kind of relationship can form. It's a type of growth that even Jesus experienced and is part of resurrection life.

It's like the growth that often happens when children grow up and go off to college or move out of their family home and make more decisions themselves and learn how to be responsible for those decisions. Parents need to let go and so do adult children; but that doesn't mean they don't love each other. Of course they do. The love doesn't stop, it changes or transforms into a new kind of relationship. Often, if the letting go doesn't happen, and parents try to control their adult children or the adult children rely too heavily on their parents to make important life decisions like choosing their major, vocation, job, or spouse, it can cause problems that could harm their relationship. It is also the kind of change professors and students make after graduation, when a former professor and student can become friends or colleagues.

This is the same kind of transition parishes and priests need to make when a priest leaves. As we are experiencing here at Church of the Good Shepherd right now, it is not easy to let go, which is why we are given this time together. Some priests and parishes really struggle with this change, so much so there are some strict rules about what a former rector can and cannot do after they leave a parish. At first, such rules might seem harsh or overly strict or controlling, but they are intended to help remind both priest and parish that things change, and those changes are often for the better. We can still be part of each other's lives. We can still be friends on Facebook and follow one another on Instagram. After I start at St. Matthias, you all are welcome to visit us in Minocqua, Wisconsin. In fact, I hope you do.

This change does not negate the relationship or ministry we've created in our 8 years together. In fact, what we've done together will always be part of us, for better or worse. Like Jesus in his prayer in today's Gospel, that is something to celebrate, because it is something that gives God glory.

Another thing we can learn from Jesus that applies to us today is to pray like Jesus by trusting God and trusting each other to God's love and care. As we continue to transition, we will need to both celebrate and let go. We will do well to remember letting go doesn't mean ignoring or not caring. It means feeling sadness, it means allowing God to transform our relationship, and make room for whatever the future holds without trying to force that future to be what we might want it to be so that we can let it be what God wants.

When we can do this, we will begin to see resurrection life is right here with us. The Holy Spirit has never left us, but in times of transition it can be more challenging to recognize it. Which is why Jesus was so wise to pray, and we would be wise to follow his example. If we do, we might realize, like we might also see in today's Gospel, Jesus has been praying for us all this time. Alleluia.



Sermon Engagement Question:

Does the idea of letting go of something or someone by entrusting them to God change your understanding of what it means to let go?

Seventh Sunday of Easter, 21 May 2023 – Sermon by Rev. Deborah Woolsey, Church of the Good Shepherd, Athens, Ohio

Please include in your prayers

IN OUR WORLD, we pray for Justin, Archbishop of Canterbury, and for Michael, our Presiding Bishop; we pray for peace with justice throughout the Middle East. We pray for all families and law enforcement affected by gun violence. We pray for the victims of the coronavirus. We pray for all people affected by natural and environmental disasters. We pray for the people who are suffering from war, especially the people of Ukraine, and we pray for all asylum seekers, immigrants and refugees. We pray for Joe our President, Kamala our Vice-President, Mike, our Governor, the Supreme Court and the members of Congress.

IN OUR DIOCESE, we pray for our Provisional Bishop Wayne, the search process for a new bishop, and for Kenneth, Nedi, and Wendell our assisting bishops.

IN OUR PARISH, we pray for Good Shepherd's continued growth, for our Rector Rev. Deborah Woolsey, for our Associate Priests, Rev. Leslie Flemming, and Rev. David McCoy, for our ministry to students, the university, and the community.

THOSE WHOM OUR PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED: Al S., Bud and Carol, Chris L., Jean R., Lia, Miriam, Sharon, R.C., Chuck Brient, Douglas and Gwynne Campbell, Zelma Coleman, Lee Kembell-Cook, Phyllis and Dick Dean, Richard DeNune, Norm Fox, Honor Haddox, Debbie Hunsberger, John Jefferson, Peter Kachenko and family, Christine McGinn, Jeff Maiden, Rev. Ed Payne, Dan and Nancy Reedy, Virginia Richards, Jack Roach, Bonnie Savage, Katyana Sayrs, Annette Secoy, Michael Vaughn, Joanne Worstall and we pray for all who care for them. **

ANNIVERSARY: John and Christy Ortman (5/25)

BIRTHDAY: Bonnie Savage (5/24)

ALTAR FLOWERS: The Altar Flowers are given in loving memory of Gus and Kosta (Alex) Karageorge by Sophia Karageorge and family.

THANKSGIVING for the upcoming Baptism of Kailey Klimkowski



** Full names are normally not published online. However for the Sunday 10:30 service we will publish full names unless requested otherwise. If you have a name to be added to the prayer list, Lynn Graham maintains this information. Lynn may be reached at **740-593-5098** or grahammowery@aol.com.

Christ Church Cathedral Cincinnati live streams its services Sundays at 10 a.m. These are saved and can be watched anytime later.

<https://cincinnati.cathedral.com/ccclive-streams/>

Washington D C -- there's much to explore at the the National Cathedral's online portal. <https://cathedral.org/worship/>

Coming up on the Calendar

Tuesday, May 23, 9:30 a.m. - - Prayer Shawl Group (Nehls)

Wednesday, May 24, 11:00 a.m. - - Julie Nehl's Service

Sunday, May 28, 10:30 a.m. - - Holy Eucharist

LOOKING AHEAD:

Wednesday, May 24, 11:00 a.m. - - Julie Nehl's Service



Coffee Hour Schedule

May 28 Anne Walker

Dates Open for Altar Flowers

In June - 4th, 18, 25th.

[To Altar Flower Procedure](#)

Notes & Announcements (additional items in the Friday Bulletin)

A Prayer for Owen Buckley

Today was Owen's last Sunday with us before his high school graduation. After which he will be going to his summer job in the Grand Canyon and from there he starts his next adventure in college. We thanked Owen for his many years of serving Church of the Good Shepherd as an acolyte and wished him

Godspeed on the next chapter of his life and reminded him we will always be waiting to welcome him home whenever he comes back.

Heavenly Father, be with Owen as he begins a new chapter of his life. We pray you to be his support is setting out, a comfort along the way, and a protection in danger. Give him wisdom to learn from his mistakes, gratitude and appreciation for the help given and received, and the wisdom to celebrate the joys he finds. Help him remember no matter where he goes, there is always the welcome of home waiting for him to return. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.



**The Episcopal Church of the Good
Shepherd 45701**

Posted by Benjamin South





**Celebration of the Life of
Julia J. Nehls
May 24, 11:00 a.m.**

The funeral for Julie Nehls will be **Livestreamed** If you cannot attend Julie's service on May 24 at 11:00 am, you can attend online and watch the service livestream. Find it on the Church of Good Shepherd's Facebook page [HERE](#).

Pentecost Sunday May 28

There are so many ways to celebrate Pentecost:

- Whether you join us in person or online, please **WEAR SOMETHING RED** (if you have it) on Pentecost Sunday. It is a fun way to represent the flames of the Holy Spirit that touched and continues to touch everyone.
- We are thrilled to be **baptizing Kailey Klimkowski** on Pentecost Sunday. The feast of Pentecost is one of the days the Book of Common Prayers suggests is especially appropriate for baptisms.
- **CAKE!** It's such a special day, we must have cake at coffee hour following the service to celebrate.

NAMI Memorial Day on the Ridges 1:00 p.m., May 29

Mother Deborah will be giving the prayer at NAMI's Memorial Day service. This is a lovely service that remembers the names of people who have been forgotten by the institution that cared for them. Like all good observances of Memorial Day, it also inspires us to care for each other.

June 4 Mother Deborah's Last Sunday

Please join us in person or online for Mother Deborah's last Sunday at Church of the Good Shepherd. For those who have not heard, Mother Deborah has accepted the call to serve as the next Rector of St. Matthias Episcopal Church in Minocqua, Wisconsin. Please join us as we say goodbye to Mother Deborah and Michael and wish them well.

For Bishop Transition News and Updates

[-- Follow this link --](#)

If you want to help the folks who have been negatively impacted by climate disaster and war anywhere in the world (including Ukraine) please consider contributing to [Episcopal Relief and Development \(ERD\)](#) which is the official ministry of the Episcopal Church.



The Clematis flower must be quite an invitation to a pollinator.





Contacts, Information

Quick Links

[Parish website](#)

[Sermons](#)

[Parish calendar](#)

[Staff](#)

[Campus Interest](#)

[E-News Guidelines
and Back Issues](#)

Pandemic Notes:

[Link to the DSO guidelines
for in-person worship](#)

In light of local conditions, we still recommend wearing masks inside the church building **regardless** of vaccination status.

Office Hours: 10:00 a.m.–
2:00 p.m., Monday through
Thursday. Masks
recommended.

[Diocese Southern Ohio](#)

[Bishop Transition](#)

[\[E\]Connections](#)

[Episcopal News Service](#)

[Episcopal Journal & Café](#)

The **Church Building** is not open for public meetings and gatherings but during office hours the thrift shop and chapel are available for individuals. Masks recommended.

CrossRoads Café is temporarily closed.

Contact Information

For pastoral needs, please contact The Rev. Deborah Woolsey at 937-689-8895 (cell) or 740-593-6877 (church), or by e-mail at revdebwoolsey@gmail.com.

To find out more about Good Shepherd and other matters, please contact Alex Buckley, Senior Warden, at 740-593-5513 or by e-mail at macbuck@yahoo.com.

For maintenance matters, please leave a note at the office or contact Dana Carlson, Junior Warden, at 740-664-2022 or by e-mail at carlsondana@hotmail.com.

For emergencies, please call The Rev. Deborah Woolsey at 937-689-8895.

NON-emergency messages can be left on the church's answering machine (740-593-6877).

The parish office administrator is Barbara

[DONATE to Good Shepherd](#)

The above takes you to the Parish page where you can find instructions or donate on-line via PayPal, If you have a preference, please indicate on the the "Add special instructions to the seller" section the purpose of the donation -- e.g. organ fund, plate collection, etc.

Check out the Church's [YouTube Channel](#).

LIKE us on Facebook [Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd 45701](#)

Martin (740-593-6877) or
barbara@chogs.org.

**The Episcopal Church of the
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chogs@chogs.org
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Office Hours:

Masks recommended.

10:00 am - 2:00 pm
Monday - Thursday
740-593-6877
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Blessings !

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