

# Worship for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

## June 21, 2020

Greeting | Bishop R. Guy Erwin

### A Revised Litany for “Black Lives Matter”

Today we stand together in solidarity with our ecumenical brothers and sisters dressed in black; we unite with all of those who have lost their lives to the unjust forces of police brutality, racial profiling and systematic oppression. As a unit we recognize and affirm that Black Bodies too belong to the One True and Living God. We are made in God’s image and likeness. Therefore, **Black Lives Matter.**

Together we go through the struggle as our ancestors did in Egypt. From the seaside of Galilee, through Samaria, to Jericho and Jerusalem they fought for freedom. From Africa to the shores of America they fought for true freedom. From age to age God empowers the powerless and dismantles unjust forces, so that all people – families, governments and nations – would turn towards truth. For this reason we cry: “**Black Lives Matter.**”

Today we wear our black to remind us of our common roots, gifted to us from our Creator, Sustainer and Giver of Life. Thus, we affirm the value, worth and dignity of all human beings and logically declare **that Black lives matter.**

Today we wear our black which is an almost universal symbol of mourning. It is a simple gesture of uniformly standing in sympathy and solidarity with grieving families in every region of the country where young men and women have died at the hands of police, whose purpose is to “serve and protect.” Together we demonstrate that **Black lives matter!**

Today we wear black to call out those who say, “They got what they deserve”, or “It was just an unfortunate tragedy”, or “There is no intentional assault on Black lives”, and lastly, “There is no conspiracy to destroy Black Boys and Black men.” Through the media we all hear it time and time again, “Our thoughts and prayers are with you.” None of this matters to the grieving families. Young men continue to get the death penalty for minor offenses.

They were all unarmed. Do you actually expect our silence when we really need to say that **Black lives matter**?

Today we're wearing black – as a solemn act of protest. The shooting, the chokehold was caught on camera. We saw it. The coroner said it was a homicide. The badge-wearing gunman exacted an extrajudicial death penalty. With a history of racism, we are certain that you understand why we protest. Together we boldly state that unjust acts must stop in our nation, unwarranted deaths and prejudice attitudes must be changed. Our children cannot continue to grow up in fear. You can understand why we are "fed up;" why we join our voices around the country and around the world to say "**Enough is Enough!**" To the prosecutors, judges, and grand juries, pardon us if we scream **Black lives matter!**

### **WE NAME BEFORE YOU NOW:**

The most recent deaths being lifted up in the Black Lives Matter Movement are: George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery. Also included in alphabetical order are: Wendell Allen, Javier Ambler, Tanisha Anderson, Alonzo Ashley, Aaron Bailey, Sean Bell, Sandra Bland, Rekia Boyd, Romain Brisbon, Michael Brown, Aaron Campbell, Philando Castile, William Chapman, Stephon Clark, John Crawford, III, Terence Crutcher, Jordan Davis, Samuel Dubose, Jordan Edwards, Jonathan Ferrell, Ezell Ford, Eric Gardner, Oscar Grant, Freddie Gray, Akai Gurley, Dontre Hamilton, Eric Harris, Cynthia Herd, Suzie Jackson, Botham Jean, Atatiana Jefferson, Alyana Jones, Ethel Lance, Joseph Mann, Trayvon Martin, Reneshia McBride, Laquan McDonald, Natasha McKenna, Depayne Middleton-Doctor, Von Derritt Myers, Dante Parker, Clementa Pickney, Jerame Reid, Tamir Rice, Chad Robertson, Calin Roquemore, Antawn Rose, Twyanza Sanders, Walter Scott, Daniel Simmons, Sharonda Singleton, Yvette Smith, Timothy Stansbury, Alton Sterling, Darrius Stewart, Cameron Tillman, Danny Ray Thomas, Myra Thompson, and Janet Wilson.

We acknowledge that all of us have fallen short of the glory of God. We too have been unjust. In our ignorance, we too have persecuted. Together we ask God for mercy and seek forgiveness. While we believe all lives matter, today we proclaim **Black Lives Matter**.

Throughout our churches, our cities, our classrooms, our jobs, and our homes, we will continue to declare God's everlasting truth, that "who the Son sets free is free indeed." This is a promise that America cannot give and cannot take away. We must proclaim:

**Black justice matters, Black freedom matters, and Black lives matter.**

*(Excerpts were taken from The Church of God in Christ, A Litany for "**Black Lives Matter**" and from the **Black Lives Matter: A Litany** by Bishop Adam J. Richardson, Jr. of the Episcopal Church)*

**Gathering Song** | "My Heart is Breaking" by Mark Miller (lyrics on screen)

**First Reading: Jeremiah 20:7-13**

*Jeremiah accuses God of forcing him into a ministry that brings him only contempt and persecution. Yet Jeremiah is confident that God will be a strong protector against his enemies and commits his life into God's hands.*

7O LORD, you have enticed me,  
and I was enticed;  
you have overpowered me,  
and you have prevailed.  
I have become a laughingstock all day long;  
everyone mocks me.  
8For whenever I speak, I must cry out,  
I must shout, "Violence and destruction!"  
For the word of the LORD has become for me  
a reproach and derision all day long.  
9If I say, "I will not mention him,  
or speak any more in his name,"  
then within me there is something like a burning fire  
shut up in my bones;  
I am weary with holding it in,  
and I cannot.  
10For I hear many whispering:  
"Terror is all around!  
Denounce him! Let us denounce him!"  
All my close friends  
are watching for me to stumble.

“Perhaps he can be enticed,  
and we can prevail against him,  
and take our revenge on him.”

<sup>11</sup>But the LORD is with me like a dread warrior;  
therefore my persecutors will stumble,  
and they will not prevail.

They will be greatly shamed,  
for they will not succeed.

Their eternal dishonor  
will never be forgotten.

<sup>12</sup>O LORD of hosts, you test the righteous,  
you see the heart and the mind;  
let me see your retribution upon them,  
for to you I have committed my cause.

<sup>13</sup>Sing to the LORD;  
praise the LORD!

For he has delivered the life of the needy  
from the hands of evildoers.

### **Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35**

<sup>1</sup>Let God arise, and let God’s ene- | mies be scattered;  
let those who | hate God flee.

<sup>2</sup>**As smoke is driven away, so you should drive | them away;  
as the wax melts before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the  
pres- | ence of God.**

<sup>3</sup>But let the righteous be glad and rejoice | before God;  
let them also be mer- | ry and joyful.

<sup>4</sup>**Sing to God, sing praises to God’s name; exalt the one who | rides the  
clouds;**

**I AM is that name, rejoice | before God! R**

<sup>5</sup>In your holy habita- | tion, O God,  
you are a father to orphans, defend- | er of widows;

<sup>6</sup>**you give the solitary a home and bring forth prisoners | into freedom;  
but the rebels shall live in | desert places.**

<sup>7</sup>O God, when you went forth be- | fore your people,  
when you marched | through the wilderness,

<sup>8</sup>**the earth quaked, and the skies poured down rain, at the presence of**

**God, the | God of Sinai,**

**at the presence of God, the | God of Israel.**

<sup>9</sup>You sent a bountiful | rain, O God;

you restored your inheritance | when it languished.

<sup>10</sup>**Your people found their | home in it;**

**in your goodness, O God, you have made provision | for the poor. R**

<sup>32</sup>Sing to God, O kingdoms | of the earth;

sing praises | to the Lord.

<sup>33</sup>**You ride in the heavens, O God, in the | ancient heavens;**

**you send forth your voice, your | mighty voice.**

<sup>34</sup>Ascribe pow- | er to God,

whose majesty is over Israel; whose strength is | in the skies.

<sup>35</sup>**How wonderful you are in your holy places, O | God of Israel,**

**giving strength and power to your people! | Blessed be God! R**

## **Romans 6:1b-11**

<sup>1b</sup>Should we continue in sin in order that grace may abound? <sup>2</sup>By no means! How can we who died to sin go on living in it? <sup>3</sup>Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? <sup>4</sup>Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

<sup>5</sup>For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. <sup>6</sup>We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. <sup>7</sup>For whoever has died is freed from sin. <sup>8</sup>But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. <sup>9</sup>We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. <sup>10</sup>The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. <sup>11</sup>So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

## **Matthew 10:24-39**

[Jesus said to the twelve:] <sup>24</sup>“A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master; <sup>25</sup>it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher, and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul,

how much more will they malign those of his household!

<sup>26</sup>“So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. <sup>27</sup>What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. <sup>28</sup>Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. <sup>29</sup>Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. <sup>30</sup>And even the hairs of your head are all counted. <sup>31</sup>So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.

<sup>32</sup>“Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; <sup>33</sup>but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven.

<sup>34</sup>“Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.

<sup>35</sup>For I have come to set a man against his father,  
and a daughter against her mother,  
and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law;

<sup>36</sup>and one’s foes will be members of one’s own household.

<sup>37</sup>Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; <sup>38</sup>and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. <sup>39</sup>Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.”

**Sermon | Pastor Craig Beeker**

**Hymn of the Day | “Be Bold” (lyrics on screen)**

**Apostle’s Creed**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;**

**he descended to the dead.\*  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

### **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

Called into unity with one another and the whole creation, let us pray for our shared world.

*A brief silence.*

Expansive God, you bring diverse voices together to form your church. Open our hearts and unstop our ears to learn from one another, that differences might not overshadow our baptismal unity. Teach us to see racial diversity as the beauty of your creation.

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Providing God, your creation shows us that life comes from death. Renew the places where our land, air, and waterways have been ill for too long. Lead us in caring for the renewal of the oceans. Direct the work of all who care for birds and their habitats.

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Protecting God, sustain and keep safe all who work to defend others across the world, especially those in our armed forces. Revive and strengthen organizations dedicated to caring for refugees and migrants while their homelands struggle for peace.

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Loving God, you promise to be with all who are persecuted for your sake. Guide all who speak your word of justice and console any who are tormented or targeted for being who they are. More than that, give us courage to stand with them, accompanying and advocating.

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Holy One, heal those who are sick. Feed all who hunger. Empower all whose voices go unheard, and help us respond to the pressing needs of our neighbors. *We especially pray for those suffering from the Covid-19 virus, and those who are suffering from fear because of the virus.*

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Compassionate God, you are with us and we are never alone. Bless all fathers and father figures who strive to love and nurture as you do. Comfort all who long to be fathers and all for whom this day is difficult.

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Reigning God, you bless us with guides and caretakers in the faith. As we give thanks for those who have died, increase our care for one another until we walk with them in newness of life.

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Receive these prayers, O God, and those too deep for words; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**Sending Song** | “Psalm 100” (lyrics on screen)

**Blessing**