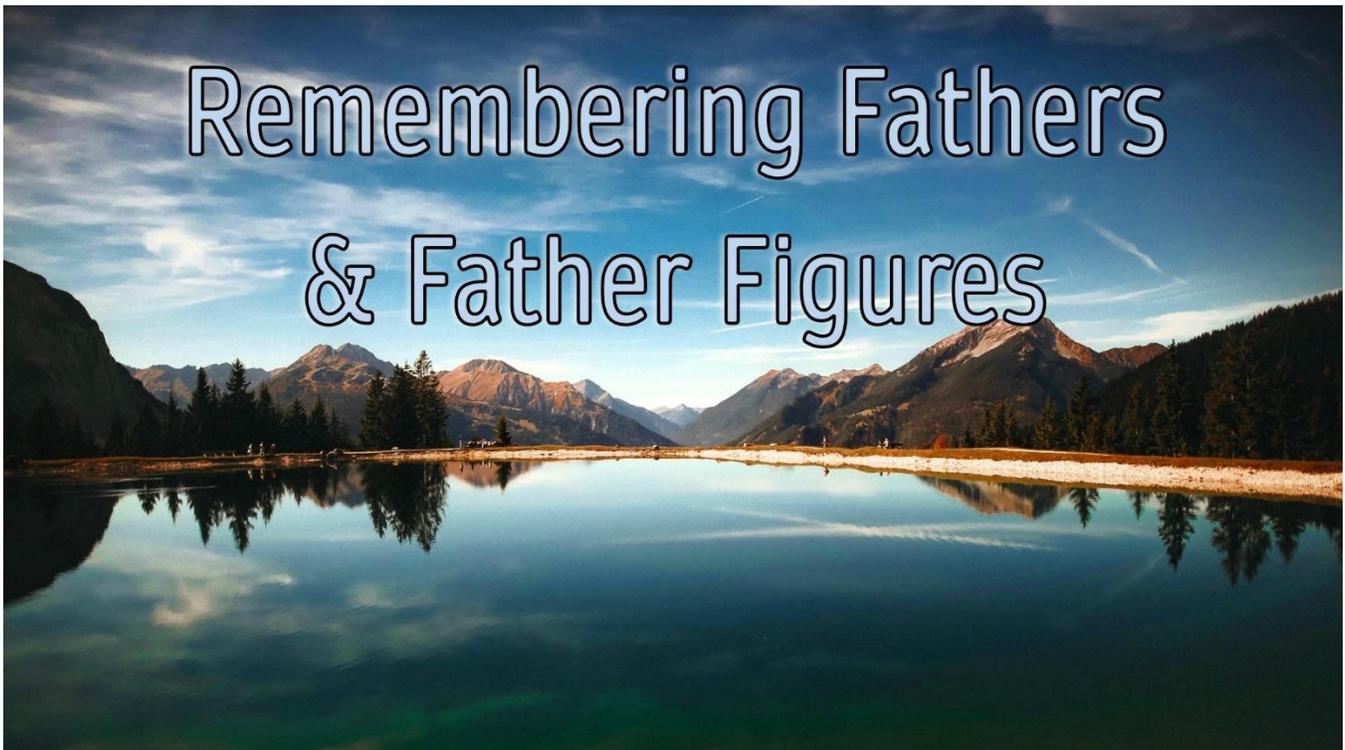


# Welcome to St James Episcopal Church...

## *We're glad that you chose to worship with us today!*

- Sanctuary fans are positioned to maximize coverage for overall comfort. When the fans are on, please leave them as they are. Move toward the center aisle if less wind is more comfortable for you.
- Masks are optional for all church activities, including worship. Distancing is still a safer practice.
- Communion is provided for those who would like to consume bread and/or wine as directed. You may participate in spiritual communion if you prefer to not receive either physical element. (*This is sacramentally appropriate any time receiving bread and/or wine is not a possibility for any reason. The bread and wine are the outward and visible signs of the inward and spiritual grace in the communion sacrament.*)

This Worship service will be live-streamed. If you have privacy concerns for yourself or your child(ren), please sit in the back left of the Sanctuary (the area closest to the Chapel). Nobody will be identifiably visible during Communion. Our videos may be viewed online live or any time: [go.mysjec.com/youtube](http://go.mysjec.com/youtube)



## **10AM Worship with Communion – June 19, 2022**

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost – Fathers & Father Figures**

Sharing  
God's Love  
Through  
Action

**ST JAMES**  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH, MANITOWOC

An inviting safe community for all

#### Today's Worship leadership includes...

*Ministers* Members of the Congregation

*Readers*  
1 — Pat Hanson  
2 — Dave Dillman  
3 — Karleen Cole

*Eucharistic Minister* Chris Eggert-Rosenthal

*Rector (Pastor)* The Rev'd Diane M Murray (Amma Diane)

*Worship Coordinator* Tony Karl

*Pianist* Barb Cook

**We are an inclusive community of faith that welcomes and celebrates diversity in age, race, nation of origin, citizenship status, gender identity, sexual orientation, social status, political view, background, ability level, marital status, and anything else that makes us unique. Whatever your reason for coming, we are glad you are here!**

-----  
 St James Episcopal Church, 434 North 8th Street, Manitowoc, WI 54220  
 mysjec.com — info@mysjec.com — Church Office: 920.684.8256  
 Amma Diane: 920.860.5152 (*cell/text*) — dianemarie.murray@gmail.com  
 -----

If you would like to know more about the life, mission, or ministries of St James Episcopal Church, please talk to any member of our Vestry (church council):

*Rector (Pastor):* The Rev'd Diane M Murray      *Wardens:* Chris Dee Eggert-Rosenthal & Mary Green  
*Vestrypersons:* Nick Doszkewycz, Joan Estes, & Tony Karl  
*Clerk:* Tony Karl      *Treasurer:* Linda Molitor

-----  
**All the words you will need are in this bulletin:** Text that the people say is prefaced with "People" or "All" and is in a **bold font**. All song lyrics are also in this bulletin.

**Wi-Fi access:** Look for our networks beginning with **CBCI-77B0** and enter password **build7443guitar**; we encourage you to share pictures and posts on social media.

**Worship/Liturgy Sources:** Our worship is based on the *Book of Common Prayer* (BCP--the red hardcover book in the pew rack), the *Book of Occasional Services*, the *Enriching Our Worship series*—the primary liturgical resources authorized by General Convention of The Episcopal Church—supplemented by occasional other resources. You may find additional prayers in the BCP on pages 832-834 helpful for personal devotion before, during, and after worship (especially prayers 64-69 and 57-61). If you'd like a BCP for your own use at home, the church can provide one for you—please talk to Amma Diane.

**Children:** Children of all ages are welcome in worship! Activity bags are available in the back of the church. A changing station is available in the restroom in the atrium just outside the sanctuary.

**Hearing Loop:** Our Hearing Loop system enables people with hearing loss to better hear sounds through our sound system. If you can set your hearing aid to a T or M/T setting, audio from our sound system will be received directly by your device (70% of aids have this feature). If your aid does not have this option, or you do not wear a hearing aid, there are a few portable headsets available in the back of the church.



**Please share your prayer requests with us:** All are invited to share their prayer requests so that the entire congregation may join in lifting up your needs and thanksgivings. Please add requests to the Prayers of the People clipboard (you can simply use first names on requests... God knows our needs). If you'd like a prayer lifted up for multiple weeks, please fill out a prayer request slip found at the back of the church.

**We worship with our bodies:** You'll notice that some of us may sit, stand, and kneel at various points in the service. Some of us may make the sign of the cross or bow now and then. Some may clap, raise their hands, or tap their feet. All of these movements are traditions from various parts of our Christian heritage—none are required, none are frowned upon. All are welcome to express whatever movements they might find meaningful in worship. Some instructions are printed throughout this bulletin—you may also observe what others do. None of these movements are a requirement: if you prefer not to use them, don't worry about it—God doesn't.

**Restrooms/Layout/Accessibility:** A handicapped-accessible restroom is located in the atrium just outside the sanctuary (next to the elevator.) Another restroom is located on the lower level. The atrium gives access to the lower level and upper level by stairs or elevator. The worship space and chapel are located on the upper level. The offices, fellowship hall, library, and classrooms are located on the lower level and marked by signs.

*The candle display in front of the Sanctuary represents our grief and prayers for victims of gun violence.*

## **Welcome!**

*All who are able, please stand.*

### **♪ God Is Here!**

[Renew 5]

God is here! As we your people meet to offer praise and prayer,  
may we find in fuller measure what is in Christ we share.

Here, as in the world around us, all our varied skills and arts  
wait the coming of the Spirit into open minds and hearts.

Here are symbols to remind us of our lifelong need of grace;  
here are table, font, and pulpit; here the cross has central place.

Here is honesty of preaching, here in silence, as in speech,  
here, in newness and renewal, God the Spirit comes to each.

Here our children find a welcome in the Shepherd's flock and fold;  
here as bread and wine are taken, Christ sustains us, as of old.

Here the servants of the Servant seek in worship to explore  
what it means in daily living to believe and to adore.

Lord of all, of Church and kingdom, in an age of change and doubt  
keep us faithful to the Gospel; help us work your purpose out.

Here, in this day's celebration, all we have to give, receive;  
we, who cannot live without you, we adore you! We believe!

Text: Fred Pratt Green, 1977. Music: Cyril Taylor, 1941. © 1979/1970 by Hope Publishing Co., All rights reserved.

*Celebrant* Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

*People* **And blessed be God's kingdom, now and forever. AMEN!**

*Celebrant* Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from  
you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the  
inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and  
worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord.

*People* **AMEN!**

*All* **Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's 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!**

*Celebrant* God be with you.

*People* **And also with you.**

*Celebrant* Let us pray. Almighty and everlasting God, you have given to us your servants grace, by the confession of a true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and in the power of your divine Majesty to worship the Unity: Keep us steadfast in this faith and worship, and bring us at last to see you in your one and eternal glory, O Father; who with the Son and the Holy Spirit live and reign, one God, for ever and ever.

*People* **AMEN!**

*Please be seated.*

### **A Prayer for the Day**

*Celebrant* Eternal God, we thank you today for the relationships in our lives. We especially thank you for our family relationships. We are grateful for the love and nurture and joy that family life brings us. Yet we also acknowledge that our families sometimes bring us pain. So, we pray today for those who struggle with broken and strained family relationships. On this Father's Day, we give you thanks for our fathers, for all they have done and continue to do in our lives. We pray for all fathers—help them, Lord, to be a blessing to their families. We pray for those whose fathers have died and who feel grief on this day. We also remember those who wanted to be fathers but could not be. And we pray for those who have been like fathers, spiritual or otherwise, in our lives. Most of all, God, we thank you for being a good father to us, showering us with love, compassion, forgiveness, and encouragement. We thank you and ask your blessings on our worship today, through Christ our Lord.

*People* **AMEN!**

### **First Lesson**

*Reader 1* A reading of Isaiah 65, verses 1 through 9.

I was ready to be sought out by those who did not ask, to be found by those who did not seek me. I said, "Here I am, here I am," to a nation that did not call on my name. I held out my hands all day long to a rebellious people, who walk in a way that is not good, following their own devices; a people who provoke me to my face continually, sacrificing in gardens and offering incense on bricks; who sit inside tombs, and spend the night in secret places; who eat swine's flesh, with broth of abominable things in their vessels; who say, "Keep to

yourself, do not come near me, for I am too holy for you." These are a smoke in my nostrils, a fire that burns all day long. See, it is written before me: I will not keep silent, but I will repay; I will indeed repay into their laps their iniquities and their ancestors' iniquities together, says the Lord; because they offered incense on the mountains and reviled me on the hills, I will measure into their laps full payment for their actions. Thus says the Lord: As the wine is found in the cluster, and they say, "Do not destroy it, for there is a blessing in it," so I will do for my servants' sake, and not destroy them all. I will bring forth descendants from Jacob, and from Judah inheritors of my mountains; my chosen shall inherit it, and my servants shall settle there.

*Reader 1* Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.  
*People* Thanks be to God.

## **Unison Reading**

*Reader 1* Let us read in unison Psalm 22, verses 18 through 27.

*All* **Be not far away, O LORD; you are my strength; hasten to help me. Save me from the sword, my life from the power of the dog. Save me from the lion's mouth, my wretched body from the horns of wild bulls. I will declare your Name to my people; in the midst of the congregation I will praise you. Praise the LORD, you that fear God; stand in awe, O offspring of Israel; all you of Jacob's line, give glory. For the Lord does not despise nor abhor the poor in their poverty; God does not forsake them; but when they cry God hears them. My praise is of the Lord in the great assembly; I will perform my vows in the presence of those who worship God. The poor shall eat and be satisfied, and those who seek the LORD shall give praise: "May your heart live for ever!" All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations shall bow down. For kingship belongs to the LORD; who rules over the nations.**

## **New Testament**

*Reader 1* A reading of Galatians chapter 3, verses 23 through 29.

Now before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law until faith would be revealed. Therefore the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian, for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through

faith. As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise.

*Reader 1* Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.  
*People* **Thanks be to God.**

*All who are able, please stand.*

## **Gospel**

Luke 8. 26-39

*Celebrant* The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

*People* **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

*Celebrant* Jesus and his disciples arrived at the country of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee. As he stepped out on land, a man of the city who had demons met him. For a long time he had worn no clothes, and he did not live in a house but in the tombs. When he saw Jesus, he fell down before him and shouted at the top of his voice, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me" -- for Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. (For many times it had seized him; he was kept under guard and bound with chains and shackles, but he would break the bonds and be driven by the demon into the wilds.) Jesus then asked him, "What is your name?" He said, "Legion"; for many demons had entered him. They begged him not to order them to go back into the abyss. Now there on the hillside a large herd of swine was feeding; and the demons begged Jesus to let them enter these. So he gave them permission. Then the demons came out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned. When the swineherds saw what had happened, they ran off and told it in the city and in the country. Then people came out to see what had happened, and when they came to Jesus, they found the man from whom the demons had gone sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid. Those who had seen it told them how the one who had been possessed by demons had been healed. Then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gerasenes asked Jesus to leave them; for they were seized with great fear. So he got into the boat and returned. The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with him; but Jesus sent him away, saying, "Return to your home, and declare how much God

has done for you." So he went away, proclaiming throughout the city how much Jesus had done for him.

*Celebrant* The Gospel of the Lord.

*People* Praise to you, Lord Christ.

*Please be seated.*

**Sermon** *Amma Diane*

## **Slideshow: Fathers & Father Figures**

*Celebrant* We'll now watch a slideshow of photos shared by our congregation of fathers and father figures.

*All who are able, please stand.*

## **Nicene Creed**

*Celebrant* Let us join in the words of the Nicene Creed.

*All* 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, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic 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!

## Prayers of the People

*Reader 3* On this day when we remember fathers, let us offer our prayers to God, who has adopted us as sons and daughters through the waters of baptism. O God, you formed your son Adam from the dust of the ground, and breathed your holy breath into his lungs, giving us all the gift of life; breathe again your Life into, us, your children and your Church, that we might be one with you.

*All* **God of love and mercy, hear our prayer.**

*Reader 3* Lord of all, you formed great nations out of great families, and blessed the children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that they might be a blessing to all. Bless our nation, and all the nations of the world, with your Fatherly Presence, wisdom, and peace.

*All* **God of love and mercy, hear our prayer.**

*Reader 3* As the children of Israel found themselves slaves, making bricks for Pharaoh, before you heard their cry and brought them to freedom we pray for all in this world who are in trouble of any kind. We pray for the poor, the hungry, the imprisoned, and the victims of war and all who live in terror's wake.

*All* **God of love and mercy, hear our prayer.**

*Reader 3* Your Son, Jesus, was raised by Joseph the carpenter, who saw him grow year by year in strength and wisdom. We pray for all in our family of faith, and especially those celebrating birthdays and anniversaries in this and coming weeks.

*All* **God of love and mercy, hear our prayer.**

*Reader 3* Your Son, Jesus, neither married nor raised children of his own, but he helped countless people come and mature to fullness of life and to Life Everlasting; and so we pray for all who nurture others with love and patience, as spiritual fathers.

*All* **God of love and mercy, hear our prayer.**

*Reader 3* Jacob's son, Joseph, to whom he gave the radiant coat, was beaten, betrayed, and sold into a life of hardship before rising to greatness; and so we pray for all who are injured, hurt, sick, lonely, or live in fear.

*All* **God of love and mercy, hear our prayer.**

*Reader 3* Gracious God, as our Heavenly Father, you gave us the gift of your own Son, and out of our human blindness the crowds called for him to die on a cross; we pray for the dying and the dead. Bring all your children home.

*All* **God of love and mercy, hear our prayer.**

*Reader 3* Receive our praise and thanks for all your blessings. We lift up the special needs and concerns of this congregation, including those on our prayer list. For confidence to offer all of our needs and concerns up to God, and for growing gratitude in all we receive, we pray.

*All* **God of love and mercy, hear our prayer.**

*Reader 3* We pray to you also for the forgiveness of our sins.

*All* **Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. AMEN!**

*Celebrant* Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through the grace of Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life.

*People* **AMEN!**

*Please be seated. Those with birthdays or anniversaries, please come forward at this time. If you would like a prayer for healing, travel, or any other needs, please let Amma Diane know.*

*Celebrant* Let us join in prayer for all those who have celebrated or will be celebrating their birthdays.

*All* **O God, our times are in your hand: Look with favor, we pray, on your servants as they begin another year. Grant that they may grow in wisdom and grace, and strengthen their trust in your goodness all the days of their life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN!**

*Celebrant* Let us join in prayer for all those who have celebrated or will be celebrating their anniversaries.

*All* **O God, you teach us through the example of Jesus that love is the fulfilment of the Law; help those couples celebrating anniversaries to persevere in love, to grow in mutual understanding, and to deepen their trust in each other; that in wisdom, patience and courage, their life together may be a source of happiness to all with whom they share it. AMEN!**

*Celebrant* To all of you celebrating milestones: May the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be upon you to guide and protect you and all those you love, today and always!

*All* **AMEN!**

*All who are able, please stand.*

## **Passing the Peace**

*Celebrant* The peace of Christ be always with you.

*People* And also with you.

*We share God's love with others from a distance with verbal greetings, waving, peace sign, etc.*

*Please be seated.*

**Announcements** *All giving announcements: please use a mic for our friends online.*

**Celebrating Our Mission, Service, & Ministries** *Congregational sharing.*

## **Offering Our Gifts & Our Selves**

*Gifts and offerings may be mailed to the church, dropped off in the mail slot, or sent through your bank. There are online giving options on our web site [mySJEC.com/donate](http://mySJEC.com/donate).*

*We are grateful for your continued financial support of our ministry and mission.*

*Celebrant* Inspire us to always share your love through action, O God:

*People* Strengthen us to always be an inviting safe community for all.

*All who are able, please stand.*

## ♪ **When Jesus Called You Father**

When Jesus called you "Father" in teaching folks to pray,

And when he said we're children who need to trust your way,

O God, he knew your closeness, your guidance from above.

Perhaps in Joseph's caring, he'd learned to trust your love.

Some cannot call you Father; they will not use that name.

The fathers they have known here have caused them fear and pain;

And though you're like a father, you're like a mother, too.

No single name can ever tell all we know of you.

Yet Jesus in his teaching described a father's joy

When, at his son's returning, he ran to greet the boy.

O God, when we have hurt you and struggled on our own,

Just like that loving parent, you run to bring us home.

O God, you seek to save us, no matter what the cost;

Our Father, your intention is no one will be lost.

As Jesus called you "Abba," and trusted in your plans,

We trust in you to guide us! Our lives are in your hands.

You hold your children's future when all will be made new.

Your house has many dwellings so we may live with you.

Just like a loving father, you answer when we pray.

In thanks, may we your children now follow you each day.

## Invitation to Communion

*from the Iona Community, Scotland*

*Celebrant* The table of bread and wine is now to be made ready. It is the table of company with Jesus, and all who love him. It is the table of sharing with the poor of the world, with whom Jesus identified himself. It is the table of communion with the earth, in which Christ became incarnate. So come to this table, you who have much faith and you who would like to have more; you who have been here often and you who have not been for a long time; you who have tried to follow Jesus, and you who have failed; come.

## Great Thanksgiving

*Celebrant* The Lord be with you.

*All* **And also with you.**

*Celebrant* Lift up your hearts.

*All* **We lift them to the Lord.**

*Celebrant* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

*All* **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

*Celebrant* God of all power, Ruler of the Universe, you are worthy of glory and praise.

*All* **Glory to you for ever and ever.**

*Celebrant* At your command all things came to be: the vast expanse of interstellar space, galaxies, suns, the planets in their courses, and this fragile earth, our island home.

*All* **By your will they were created and have their being.**

*Celebrant* From the primal elements you brought forth the human race, and blessed us with memory, reason, and skill. You made us the rulers of creation. But we turned against you, and betrayed your trust; and we turned against one another.

*All* **Have mercy, Lord, for we are sinners in your sight.**

*Celebrant* Again and again, you called us to return. Through prophets and sages you revealed your righteous Law. And in the fullness of time you sent your only Son, born of a woman, to fulfill your Law, to open for us the way of freedom and peace.

*All* **By his blood, he reconciled us. By his wounds, we are healed.**

*Celebrant* And therefore we praise you, joining with the heavenly chorus, with prophets, apostles, and martyrs, and with all those in every generation who have looked to you in hope, to proclaim with them your glory, in their unending hymn:

*All* **Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

*Celebrant* And so, Father, we who have been redeemed by him, and made a new people by water and the Spirit, now bring before you these gifts. Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ our Lord.

On the night he was betrayed he took bread, said the blessing, broke the bread, and gave it to his friends, and said, "Take... eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper, he took the cup of wine, gave thanks, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Remembering now his work of redemption, and offering to you this sacrifice of thanksgiving,

*All* **We celebrate his death and resurrection, as we await the day of his coming.**

*Celebrant* Lord God of our Fathers and Mothers: God of Abraham and Sarah, of Isaac and Rebekah, of Jacob, Leah, and Rachel; God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: Open our eyes to see your hand at work in the world about us. Deliver us from the presumption of coming to this Table for solace only, and not for strength; for pardon only, and not for renewal. Let the grace of this Holy Communion make us one body, one spirit in Christ, that we may worthily serve the world in his name.

*All* **Risen Lord, be known to us in the breaking of the Bread.**

*Celebrant* Accept these prayers and praises, Father, through Jesus Christ our great High Priest, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, your Church gives honor, glory, and worship, from generation to generation.

*All* **AMEN!**

*Celebrant* As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,

*All* **Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever. AMEN!**

## Breaking Bread

*Celebrant* Alleluia! Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

**All** Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia!

*Celebrant* The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

*The Celebrant will extend the invitation to communion to those present and those watching online and give instructions. Visitors are welcome to receive communion or a blessing.*

*All who are able, please stand.*

*Celebrant* Let us pray.

**All** Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. AMEN!

## Blessing

*Celebrant* May Almighty God, who enlightened the minds of the disciples by pouring out upon them the Holy Spirit, make you rich with God's blessings, that you may abound more and more in that Spirit for ever.

**People** Alleluia! AMEN!

*Celebrant* May God, who sent the Holy Spirit as a flame of fire that rested upon the heads of the disciples, burn out all evil from your hearts, and make them shine with the pure light of God's presence.

**People** Alleluia! AMEN!

*Celebrant* May God, who by the Holy Spirit caused those of many tongues to proclaim Jesus as Lord, strengthen your faith and send you out to bear witness to Jesus Christ in word and deed.

**People** Alleluia! AMEN!

*Celebrant* And may the blessing of God, who Creates, Redeems, and Sustains, be upon you and all you love and pray for, this day and forever more.

**People** Alleluia! AMEN!

## ♪ **Here I Am, Lord**

[Renew #149]

I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my people cry.

All who dwell in dark and sin my hand will save.

I, who made the stars of night, I will make their darkness bright.

Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you calling in the night.

I will go, Lord, if you lead me. I will hold your people in my heart.

I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my people's pain.

I have wept for love of them. They turn away.

I will break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love alone.

I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send?

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you calling in the night.

I will go, Lord, if you lead me. I will hold your people in my heart.

I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame,

I will set a feast for them. My hand will save.

Finest bread I will provide till their hearts be satisfied.

I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send?

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you calling in the night.

I will go, Lord, if you lead me. I will hold your people in my heart.

Words and Music: Dan Schutte, 1981. Based on Isaiah 6:8. All Rights Reserved.

## **Sending**

*Celebrant* Created in the image of God, go into the world:

*People* **We will go to bring new life to all!**

*Celebrant* Followers of Jesus, go into the world:

*People* **We will go to bring healing to all!**

*Celebrant* Gifted by the Spirit of grace, go into the world:

*People* **We will go to work so all may be one, as God is one!**

*Celebrant* Go forth into the world, sharing the Good News of God's love. Alleluia, alleluia!

*People* **Thanks be to God! Alleluia, alleluia!**

**Thank you for celebrating with us today! Please join us downstairs after worship for refreshments, snacks, and conversation.**

*Thank you for your support! Gifts may be mailed to the church or sent through your bank.*

*There are also online giving options on our web site at [mySJEC.com/donate](http://mySJEC.com/donate).*

*June's special offering supports the Rector's Discretionary Fund—please label accordingly.*



**ST JAMES**  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH, MANITOWOC

An inviting safe community for all

## St James Weekly for the week starting June 19, 2022

St James Episcopal Church  
434 N 8th St, Manitowoc, WI 54220  
920-684-8256 (church office)  
info@mysjec.com  
mysjec.com  
facebook.com/sjecmanitowoc

The Rev Diane M Murray, Rector  
920-860-5152 (cell phone)  
920-894-5245 (daytime phone)  
dianemarie.murray@gmail.com  
Please contact Amma Diane with  
any pastoral care or other needs.

**Masks are optional for all church activities. Distancing is still a safer practice. Thanks!**

### Recurring Schedule

#### Book Discussion Sundays 8:30AM (in-person/Zoom)

**UPDATED!** Discussion of *Book of Forgiving: The Fourfold Path for Healing Ourselves and Our World* by Nobel laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu & his daughter, Anglican priest Mpho A Tutu, will begin on 6/26. This book helps answer the question, How do I forgive? The Tutus lay out the simple but profound truths about the significance of forgiveness, how it works, why everyone needs to know how to grant it and receive it, and why granting forgiveness is the greatest gift we can give to ourselves when we have been wronged. They explain the four-step process of forgiveness as well as offer meditations, exercises, and prayers.

By computer or other device: [go.mysjec.com/biblestudy](http://go.mysjec.com/biblestudy)  
To participate from any phone, dial 1-312-626-6799  
When prompted for Meeting ID, enter 580 876 932 #  
When prompted for Participant ID, press #  
When prompted for Password, enter 0 # [number zero]

#### Worship—Sundays at 10AM (in-person/online)

Attend in-person at 10AM, or participate LIVE at 10AM or view at any time after on YouTube (*video links are also shared on Facebook*): [go.mysjec.com/youtube](http://go.mysjec.com/youtube)

6/19 Pentecost 2: Fathers & father figures  
6/26 Pentecost 3: World Refugee Day observance  
7/3 Pentecost 4: Independence Day weekend

#### Fellowship—Sundays at 11:15AM (in-person)

Please join us downstairs after worship each week for refreshments, snacks, and conversation. Coffee, tea, and water will be provided. We invite anybody who is interested to bring snacks/treats to share any week.

#### Mid-Week Worship—Wed at 4:30PM (Zoom)

**On break —resumes with new 4:30PM time on July 13.**

By computer or other device: [go.mysjec.com/Wednesday](http://go.mysjec.com/Wednesday)  
To participate from any phone, dial 1-312-626-6799  
When prompted for Meeting ID, enter 670 567 006 #  
When prompted for Participant ID, press #  
When prompted for Password, enter 0 # [number zero]

#### Morning Prayer—Fridays at 7:00AM (Zoom)

By computer or other device: [go.mysjec.com/Friday](http://go.mysjec.com/Friday)  
To participate from any phone, dial 1-312-626-6799  
When prompted for Meeting ID, enter 831 5230 0483 #  
When prompted for Participant ID, press #  
When prompted for Password, enter 0 # [number zero]

#### Celebrating Our Mission, Service, & Ministries

Help us grow the St James Tree of Life! One of our sub-goals is to “Regularly celebrate the mission, service, and ministries of individuals, inviting them to share these experiences to educate and encourage others”.

We invite you to sign up for a date to share briefly (1-3 minutes) about any mission, service, or ministry you are involved in through St James, another organization, or in your own way. You can share what you do, why you became involved, and anything else you’d like to add. If you’re involved in more than one mission, service, or ministry, we invite you to sign up to share on more than one date. It’s okay if more than one person shares about the same thing on different dates. Thanks!

If you have any questions, please talk to Chris Eggert-Rosenthal, Tony Karl, or Amma Diane.

#### Please pray for upcoming General Convention (7/8-7/11) & Lambeth Conference (7/26-8/8)

The 80th General Convention of The Episcopal Church will take place July 8-11 in Baltimore, MD. The General Convention is the governing body of The Episcopal Church. The Convention is a bicameral legislature that includes the House of Deputies, which has more than 800 members, and the House of Bishops, which is comprised of nearly 300 active and retired bishops. The Convention meets every three years and has the authority to amend the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church; adopt the budget for the church for the next three years; authorize liturgical texts and amend the Book of Common Prayer; adopt communions and covenants with other churches; set qualifications for orders of ministry and office-holders; elect officers of the General Convention, the Executive Council, and members of boards; and delegate responsibilities to the interim bodies of The Episcopal Church. The schedule has been shortened this year due to COVID.

The 15th Lambeth Conference will take place July 26—August 8 in Lambeth, England. The Episcopal Church is part of the Anglican branch of Christianity. The Lambeth Conference is a gathering of bishops from across the Anglican Communion for prayer and reflection, fellowship and dialogue on church and world affairs. With the theme of ‘God’s Church for God’s World - walking, listening and witnessing together,’ the conference will explore what it means for the Anglican Communion to be responsive to the needs of a 21st Century world.

## Vestry Notes

- Plaster work in the Chapel has been completed., and most of the re-painting is complete.
  - In June we'll be adjusting the positioning of our pews, rotating them inward at a small angle. This is to help enhance our feeling of being in community while we worship. This plan was discussed by the congregation several times previously and delayed for a few years due to COVID and other work.
  - We will be installing a new mailbox by the State St glass doors and eventually making our 8th St door for emergency use only. This is to increase safety.
  - We will be hosting some movie-watching events at St James in the near future. If you have suggestions for days/times you prefer, please let Amma Diane know.
  - We're resuming work on previously delayed parking lot labyrinth and little free library projects.
  - Financial reports are posted outside the office.
- Next Vestry meeting will be on Zoom at 5PM on 6/28.

## "Helping Our Neighbors" mission project

The poverty rate in Manitowoc is about 14%, and hunger continues to impact families and individuals. Over the next few months, we invite you to bring non-perishable food, hygiene products, and personal care items to donate as often as you are able. We'll have a collection spot in the front left of the Sanctuary near the piano (similar to what we did in Advent), and volunteers will periodically deliver these items to Peter's Pantry. If you'd like to contribute financially, label your gift "Helping Our Neighbors" (checks payable to St James).



## New sanctuary fans

New fans have been purchased and set up around the perimeter of the Sanctuary. Fans are positioned to provide maximum circulation for overall comfort. When the fans are on, please leave them set as they are —do not move, adjust, or turn off. If it is too drafty for you near the outer aisles, please move toward the center aisle while the fans are in use. Thanks!

## Sunday Fellowship time

We've resumed Fellowship time with snacks and refreshments after Worship every Sunday. Coffee, tea, and water will be provided. As we transition back to this, we invite anybody who is interested to bring snacks/treats to share any week. Over the Summer, we'll determine if we want to adapt this as we move into the Fall. **We invite everybody to take turns helping with the simple clean-up—there is a sign-up sheet in church.**

## **UPDATED!** Prayers for the Week

**Healing/Comfort/Strength:** Steve & Marybeth, Virginia, Elizabeth, Vanessa, Debbie, Silas, Laurie, Geno, Bonnie, Bonnie & Charlie, Marcia & John, Chip & Janice, Steven, Len & Margaret, Mary, Vicki, Tom, Grace, Matthew, Sid, Shelley, Karleen, Judy M & Misty, Al, Richard, Lisa B, Mike, Bishop Matt & Leslie, Pete, Dave, Nancy T, Brian M.

**Guidance & Discernment:** Tim, Guy & Mary, Kurt, Ronald, Alison, Susie, Brian & Lisa, Frankie, Deb & Jim, Joy's grandson.

**Serving in the Military:** Jordan, Ian, Logan, Keaton, Marshall, Jacob, Jack.

**Additional Prayers we offer include:** For Peace in our world... for the people of Ukraine, Russia, Afghanistan, Haiti, Israel, Gaza, Sudan, Madagascar and missionary families. In the Diocesan cycle of prayer, we pray for Christ the King, Sturgeon Bay and St George's Mission District, Masvingo. We pray for the Diocesan Summer Camps starting June 19. In the Anglican cycle of prayer, we pray for Province of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan. For the Dioceses of Fond du Lac, Eau Claire, and Milwaukee and the dialogue taking place among them. For people living with mental illness. For Painting Pathways Clubhouse. Hope House families. The men of The Haven. We pray for those working in government in our cities, state, country, and the world. We pray for our neighborhood. For the people around the world affected by the coronavirus pandemic. Pray for an end to violence, racism and social injustice in our country and around the world. Pray for people around the world dealing with severe weather and related damage, injury, and deaths. We pray for those in the world who do not have enough to eat, may we help to keep food available to all.

**We offer thanks for:** Diane our Rector, Chris and Mary, our Wardens, our Vestry and other ministry leaders, staff, and every person in this congregation. Bishop Matt Gunter and his wife Leslie and family. Presiding Bishop Michael Curry and his wife, Sharon. Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby. For our companion Diocese of Masvingo in Zimbabwe and the appointment of Reverend Friar Fungayi Nyandoro as the Vicar General of Masvingo Diocese until a Diocesan Ordinary (Bishop) is elected.

**We Pray for the Departed:** Tom & Audrey, Audrey & Clayton, Pat, Myrna, Cindy, Joe, Paul, Clarence & Liese, Deena, Shirley, David Johnson, Gary Drohman, Mitch, all who have died as a result of gun violence.

## Milestones

We pray for those celebrating milestones:

**Birthdays:** 6/4 Amma Diane Murray; 6/9 Jill Short; 6/15 Sally Hunner; 6/22 Sandra Olson; 6/28 Peggy Turnbull; 6/29 David Grams.

**Anniversaries:** 6/3 Hugh & Liz Foster; 6/6 Murray & Nancy Sim; 6/11 Chuck Wernecke & Dianne Wilson; 6/16 Bob & Peggy Turnbull; 6/19 Karleen & Skip Cole; 6/29 Mike & Sharon Laughrin.

**Ordination Anniversary:** 5/23 Amma Diane

*If you would like your prayer requests to be included on our list, or to add a milestone, please contact Amma Diane Murray by phone (920-860-5152) or email (dianemarie.murray@gmail.com).*

## Gun Violence, Sin, and Regulation

A Teaching for the Church, by *The Rt Rev Matt Gunter, Bishop of Fond du Lac/Bishop Provisional of Eau Claire*

- Gun violence has become a public health issue in the United States unparalleled in any other democratic, industrialized nation. This is not just about politics; it is a moral issue.
- Jesus calls his disciples to deny themselves and follow in his footsteps which are steps of mercy, peace, and reconciliation
- Christianity asserts that each human person is created in the image of God and therefore sacred, beautiful, beloved of God, and of infinite value. But we are also all caught in the interrelated web of Sin.
- Seeking to be faithful to Jesus' way of peace and recognizing to radical reality of Sin that affects us all, the Church tradition has insisted that the use of weapons be restricted to those officially authorized to do so
- Knowing our own sinful tendencies and unruly passions, Christians are right to distrust ourselves with weapons designed to kill other human beings
- Regardless of laws and regulations, Christians are called to a life of peace, witnessing to the hope of resurrection.
- There is room, even within an open interpretation of the Second Amendment, to advocate for more effective gun safety measures for the sake of the welfare of society.

### Introduction

Gun violence has become a public health issue in the United States unparalleled in any other democratic, industrialized nation. This is not just about politics; it is a moral issue. We are regular shocked, if no longer surprised by mass murders. Gun violence in our cities and elsewhere has become so common as to hardly make the news. Guns are now the leading cause of death for American children. They are common cause of fatal accidents in homes and a common means of suicide. Sadly, the list goes on and on.

The Anglican Tradition has not been a pacifist tradition. It has allowed that, under certain circumstances, "It is lawful for Christian men [and women], at the commandment of the Magistrate, to wear weapons, and serve in the wars" (Articles of Religion XXXVII). This has been the majority position of most of the Christian Church generally for most of its history. But it is also the case, even with that, that there is in the Church's teaching a deep ambivalence about the use of violence, the passions in the human heart that lead to violence, and the passions that violence enflames.

### Scripture

The Church's ambivalence about violence is rooted in the life and teaching of Jesus and the witness of the New Testament.

The Birth Narratives that we remember every Christmas serve as a prologue and summary of the Gospel. In Luke 1:78-79, Zechariah prophesies of Jesus that he will "guide our feet into the way of peace." When the angels appear to the shepherds proclaiming glad tidings of great joy at the coming of a savior, they sing of peace on earth as part of what salvation is about (Luke 2:14). At his death on the cross, Jesus prayed forgiveness for his killers and those who taunted him as he hung dying (Luke 23:34).

Between the bookends of his birth and death, Jesus, in his words and actions, demonstrated a consistent pattern. There is the clear command in the Sermon on the Mount to not resist evil and to turn the other cheek (Matthew 5:39), to love our enemies (Matthew 5:43), and to perfectly show mercy to the evil and the good so that we might be children of our Father in heaven (Matthew 5:45-48). The warning against anger (Matthew 5:21-22) fits the pattern. Beyond the Sermon, Jesus expresses grief over Jerusalem for its refusal to pursue the way of peace (Luke 19:42). He declares that his peace is different from this world's (John 14:27). He rebukes his disciples for desiring to exact retribution on the Samaritans who did not welcome him (Luke 9:55), a verse made even more telling in the King James Version in which Jesus adds, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." He emphatically rebukes Peter for drawing a weapon to defend Jesus and perhaps himself (Matthew 26:52). And at the last, Jesus refuses to defend himself with the "twelve legions of angels" that were ready at hand for his defense (Matthew 26:53). From the

beginning to the end and in-between Jesus demonstrates a consistent pattern of peacefulness and rejection of violence, certainly lethal violence, even in self-defense.

Jesus calls his would-be disciples to deny themselves, take up the cross and follow him (Matthew 16:24) patterning our lives after his. He left us an example, so that we should follow in his steps (1 Peter 2:21) and "walk in love as he loved us and gave himself for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God" (Ephesians 5:1). He calls them to be peacemakers (Matthew 5:9), sharing in his ministry of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:18).

Following Jesus puts us at odds with the pattern of this world with its selfishness, violence, vengeance, and self/group-preservation. That is the pattern of the world to which we are warned not to conform in Romans 12:2. Romans 12 goes on to describe a community patterning its life on Jesus, including these echoes of Jesus, "Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them" and, "Repay no one evil for evil, etc." (Romans 12:17-21). This is a thread that runs through the New Testament, most explicitly in passages like 1 Thessalonians 5:15, 1 Peter 2:20-25, 1 Peter 3:9-12, Hebrews 12:14, and James 3:18.

### Tradition

This witness of the New Testament, along with the assurance that Death had been defeated in the death and resurrection of Jesus, led the earliest Christians to embrace a commitment to nonviolence as the best way to "follow in his steps." That attitude began to change some after the formal conversion of the Roman Empire. But only somewhat. There was a growing acceptance that government officials, including soldiers, might be authorized under specific conditions to use force and violence. But violence on a personal level was still considered sinful. St. Ambrose (340-397), Bishop of Milan, wrote, *I do not think that a Christian, a just and a wise man, ought to save his own life by the death of another; just as when he meets with an armed robber he cannot return his blows, lest in defending his life he should stain his love toward his neighbor. The verdict on this is plain and clear in the books of the Gospel, "Put up thy sword, for everyone that taketh the sword shall perish with the sword." (Matthew 26: 52). What robber is more hateful than the persecutor who came to kill Christ? But Christ would not be defended from the wounds of the persecutor, for He willed to heal all by His wounds.* (On the Duties of the Clergy)

St. Augustine (354-430), Bishop of Hippo, is the most influential theologian in Christian history. He allowed that violence can be exercised faithfully by those to whom authority to do so is delegated by the government on behalf of the community, i.e., the courts, police, and the military. But that was only true for the one to whom authority was delegated. He concludes that to kill without that authority can only be murder (The City of God, I.21). He also wrote, *As to killing others in order to defend one's own life, I do not approve of this, unless one happens to be a soldier or public functionary acting, not for himself, but in defense of others or of the city in which he resides, if he acts according to the commission lawfully given him, and in the manner becoming his office.* (Letter 47, To Publicola, sec. 5)

St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) was the most influential theologian of the Middle Ages. Going further than the witness of Jesus, he allows that using force in self-defense is permissible. But that should be done without the intent to kill. *But as it is unlawful to take a man's life, except for the public authority acting for the common good, as stated above (Article 3), it is not lawful for a man to intend killing a man in self-defense, except for such as have public authority, who while intending to kill a man in self-defense, refer this to the public good, as in the case of a soldier fighting against the foe, and in the minister of the judge struggling with robbers, although even these sin if they be moved by private animosity.* (cf. Summa Theologia, II-II, 64,7)

The great Reformer, John Calvin's teaching significantly influenced early Anglicanism. In his commentary on Matthew 26:52 and elsewhere, he defends the right of magistrates to wield the sword. He also allows that a civilian might use violence to protect his or her property. But he imposes this stringent caveat, *And yet it is not the mere goodness of the cause that acquits the conscience from guilt, unless there be also pure affection. So then, in order that a*

*man may properly and lawfully defend himself, he must first lay aside excessive wrath, and hatred, and desire of revenge, and all irregular sallies of passion, that nothing tempestuous may mingle with the defense. As this is of rare occurrence, or rather, as it scarcely ever happens, Christ properly reminds his people of the general rule, that they should entirely abstain from using the sword [and the gun].* (Commentary on Matthew 26:52)

So, for Calvin, an ordinary person/civilian might, in theory, resort to violence. But in practice, given the almost impossible requirement of dispassion for it to be just and not murder, Christians desiring to follow Christ should “entirely abstain from using the sword [and the gun].”

The Church discerned, given our broken and sinful humanity, that under certain prescribed and circumscribed circumstances, a degree of violence as a last resort might be necessary and therefore just. But that violence is reserved for those trained and authorized to exercise it under the law, with discipline and dispassion. We are grateful for their service. Even so, that use of violence is a concession to tragic human reality shaped by Sin and not something – for Christians, anyway – to bless, revel in, or glorify. And it is not something for individuals and civilians to take upon themselves.

### **Sin & Unregulated Passions**

In referring to “irregular sallies of passion,” Calvin was following Jesus who warned against the passions of the heart that lead to sin (cf Mark 7:21-23). In the New Testament and the Christian tradition, sin is not just about breaking rules, it is rooted in unregulated passions that disturb our inner peace and prevent us from living the peace of Christ. According to Titus 3:3, being “slaves to various passions and pleasures” means “passing our days in malice and envy, hated by men and hating one another.” And when Paul lists the works of the flesh that are opposed to the Spirit, along with “fornication, impurity, and licentiousness,” he also lists “idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these” (Galatians 5:19-21). In Matthew 5:21-22, Jesus particularly warned against indulging in the passion of anger which he said is related to murder.

And so, self-control and regulating our passions is a recurrent theme in the New Testament and the early Church. It is rooted in Jesus’ declaration that self-denial is a basic requirement for being among his followers (Matt. 16:24, Mark 8:34, Luke 9:23). It is listed as a fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:23). The early Church continued recognizing the centrality of self-control to the Christian way.

Christianity asserts that each human person is created in the image of God and therefore sacred, beautiful, beloved of God, and of infinite value. But we are also all caught in the interrelated web of Sin. Even the most committed and faithful of us continues, this side of the kingdom of God, to be susceptible to the radical, pervasive reality of sin and uncontrolled passions that draw us from the love of God and our neighbor.

Our sinfulness infects us deep down in our hearts and distorts our imaginations. Thus, it infects even our best intentions. As Paul writes, “I find it to be a law that when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand” (Romans 7:21). This is true even for followers of Jesus. It is true even if we are as sure as we can be that our cause is just. Our hearts are still prone to selfishness, envy, greed, deceit (not least, self-deceit), anger, hatred, desire for revenge, and violence. Our hearts. My heart. Your heart. Not just the “bad” guys. Not just criminals. Not just the people we do not like. If we believe in sin at all, we believe it is radical, pervasive, and universal. There are no “good” guys. Even the best of us is prone to losing control and being a bad guy under stress and duress. We should therefore be distrustful of ourselves and our motives. And, as Calvin points out, we should distrust our ability to engage in violence righteously given our irregular sallies of passion.

We are a society in which we all have been encouraged to give free reign to every passion. We are all rather undisciplined and given to unregulated sallies of passion. This is a set up for trouble. We should not be surprised by the unprecedented levels of gun violence in this country and the resulting heartache and grief. If we

take sin seriously, not least our own sinfulness and the sinfulness of those who are like us, we should not be surprised that a society flooded with guns is drowning in violence.

### **Christians, Weapons, and Regulation**

The Second Amendment of the Constitution asserts that, “the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.” Just what that means in the context of the whole of the amendment has been a subject of debate. In 2008, the Supreme Court settled some of that debate for the time being when it decided *District of Columbia v. Heller*, in which the court held for the first time that the Second Amendment protected an individual right to gun ownership. Specifically, it held that the amendment protected an individual right to keep a usable handgun at home.

But that does not settle the question for Christians. The Constitution is a remarkable document that continues to guide the United States. But it is not inspired scripture. Christians must make a distinction between what is legal and what is faithful and moral. Regardless of particular laws allowing for it, it is hard to take Jesus, the Christian tradition, and the radical reality of sin seriously and to justify civilian disciples of Jesus owning weapons designed for war and the killing of human beings – created in the image of God. It is harder still to justify carrying such weapons in public where one might be tempted to give into sinful passions and fear and potentially kill someone. We ought not to put ourselves or others in the position of being tempted to murder intentionally or unintentionally. Page 5 Gun Violence, Sin, and Regulation

*District of Columbia v. Heller* did not rule out all regulating of firearms. According to those involved in writing the decision, Heller “merely established the constitutional baseline that the government may not disarm citizens in their homes.” They go on, *The opinion expressly recognized “presumptively lawful” regulations such as “laws imposing conditions and qualifications on the commercial sale of arms,” as well as bans on carrying weapons in “sensitive places,” like schools, and it noted with approval the “historical tradition of prohibiting the carrying of ‘dangerous and unusual weapons.’”* *Heller* also recognized the immense public interest in “prohibitions on the possession of firearms by felons and the mentally ill.” (John Bash and Kate Shaw, ‘We Clerked for Justices Scalia and Stevens. America Is Getting Heller Wrong.’, The New York Times, May 31, 2022)

That leaves quite a bit of room for us as a society to pursue reasonable measures to address our epidemic of gun violence. Regulating guns is not the only thing necessary to address this epidemic. Addressing other issues like mental health, poverty, racism, and more effective policing are also necessary. We also need to re-evaluate our infatuation with the notion of “good” violence

The community has a stake in finding ways to assure that our common life is safe and good for everyone. We are not just a collection of individuals insisting on our own rights without regard for how the accumulation of our choices effect the whole and shape the society in which we live. No individual freedom is absolute, including the freedom to own weapons. Because we recognize the reality of sin, we have various laws and regulations to govern our common life. There are reasonable, common sense gun safety measures which polls consistently show enjoy the support of gun owners and non-gun owners alike that do not compromise responsible civilian gun ownership.

Gun violence has become a public health issue as well as a moral issue in the United States unparalleled in any other democratic, industrialized nation. Doing nothing to address that is irresponsible. As Jeremiah told those in exile in Babylon to “seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.” For the sake of the welfare of this nation and our souls, let us pray for the grace to regulate ourselves, let us be peacemakers following in the footsteps of Jesus, and let us urge our elected officials (magistrates) to make sure that guns are well regulated to better address our epidemic of violence.