

Gospel and Sermon Transcript -6th Sunday After Pentecost - July 20, 2025

Welcome to worship.

We're delighted you're here.

I'm going to aim some comments at many of you because we don't all know each other,

but we are delighted that you are here today for the baptism of Eloise.

And I see you are prepared.

You're already looking over your notes,

so you will be ready.

We have, because this is an event that belongs to us all,

we are grateful that a number of people have helped prepare for today's baptism.

We'll have assistance from our congregational chair when we get to the welcome.

I will talk a minute about communion long enough to say we invite everybody,

and I was trying to figure out how should we do this today.

I think what we might do is, if we could have all of you who are connected to the baptism first,

and we will just line everyone up, just kind of from one side to the other,

and we will bring you red and white.

And for those who have youngsters, we can name them two unless parents would rather not.

Just let me know.

Otherwise, I would gladly do that.

[music]

The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 10th chapter.

[inaudible]

Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a certain village where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home.

She had a sister named Mary who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying.

But Martha was distracted by her many tasks, and so she came to Jesus and she asked,

"Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself?

Tell her then to help me."

But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things.

There is need of only one thing.

Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken from her."

The Gospel of our Lord.

[inaudible]

The Sermon

Grace and peace to you from God who loves extravagantly

and whose intention it is to mend together all things.

It was rightly observed by one of the pundits in our church that it is hot in here, so I'm going to cut to the chase.

Martha's deal is that she is distracted

and distracted not by things that are unhelpful

but by the things that are right and beneficial and that even are part of her culture

to welcome someone meant not only feeding them but seeing after every need.

So Martha's distraction comes because of the enormity of the task.

It comes because she doesn't have help,

and it also comes because Mary has chosen to step outside the prescribed hospitable gender roles of hospitality.

And she does what Sarah of Old does.

She listens for a word from the Lord that comes from Jesus.

It's easy to think about how we get distracted

and we forget what the main thing is.

And even this morning I thought about how we have sort of been a living parable

or an enactment of what it means to be hospitable

but to remember why we're hospitable.

As I look around there were a number of people who have been preparing

for a couple of months actually getting details squared away,

making sure that as we gather today this baptism could happen.

And we do that out of love for people who come to us.

We welcome people and there is for us an end game.

And the end game you actually heard spoken of as Eloise was baptized today

that we form ourselves into communities where we proclaim love,

we care for the world that God made, we work for justice and peace.

Back to Martha, you wonder if she really noticed Jesus,

that there if she was too overwhelmed with all of the jobs that she had to do.

And maybe that happens to us now and again.

I think if I were to speak for say the whole Lutheran church,
which is really above my pay grade but I'm going to anyway,
we sometimes get distracted by did we do it right, did we say it right,
do we have the right kind of building, does that in the third.

And we forget Jesus in our midst.

And I am also going to say that I think sometimes the Christian community
fails to recognize Jesus in society.

I go back to maybe a couple years older than Vincent maybe,
but I remember the priest in our church reading Jesus' words about the sheep and
the goats

and saying that what you do to the least of these, it's as if you've done it to me.

I think that's hospitality. When we remember those people who hunger,

those people who maybe are new to our country,

or we remember those who are sick, when we reach out, we reach out for their
sake,

but we reach out for the sake of the one who calls us all together
to proclaim God's love in the world.

So it's not doing that's bad, and it's not being that's bad.

I think it's trying to split them apart that gets us in trouble.

So when Martha asks Jesus to choose and to meddle in family things,

Jesus wisely doesn't go there.

He offers us both and.

I'd like to suggest a thought experiment
that when we think about doing and being as people who follow Jesus,
or we think about doing and being as church,
they go together, action and contemplation, as Richard Rohrer likes to say.
So here's the thought experiment.
I would like you to go through the rest of the day only inhaling.
No exhalation allowed. Just do that for the rest of the day.
If you're not wanting to try that.
Okay, well I've got another idea for you then.
So just go through the day exhaling then.
Just letting the breath out all the time.
Expell, expell, expell, and don't bother taking one in.
You don't seem any more interested in that option than you did the first.
So clearly, when we speak of hospitality,
when we speak of doing and being, it is like breathing,
it's both the taking in and the releasing.
It is a balance.
And now if I can get a little woo-woo on you,
I'm going to try this and we do have a friend who is of the Jewish faith.
So I'm going to kind of lean over and look at you,
and if I totally take this, I want to know before I go too far.
But rabbis teach that one of the names for God, because the name is so holy,

is Yahweh.

And if you say it just right, it's designed to sound like human breath in and out.

And that's how we live our lives.

We live that, both in the doing and in the being.

And in our being hospitable, we do that in the ways we welcome in action,

but also in that reflection and that noticing.

Just who is it who's right before us?

Amen.