

**WELCOME TO WORSHIP!**

The God-lived life is a life of *showing* God’s love. Last month, we focused on letting that shine in serving others, doing things for them. In today’s worship, the emphasis shifts a bit, and we look at the God-lived life as one that isn’t only doing things for others but *opening our lives* to them. As we invite people into our lives and our homes, God gives us opportunities to show what we are all about and share who we are all about. Through hospitality, as messy and dangerous as it can be, relationships are built, and Jesus is shared.

This month, we focus especially on relationships in our lives that show and share Jesus.

Month One: A Life of Being a Disciple

Month Two: A Life Lived for Others

**Month Three:**  **A Life of Hospitality**

Month Four A Life Lived Shrewdly

**PRAYER OF PREPARATION**

Lord God, in coming to hear your Word this morning, you have planted us like trees beside streams of water. Grant that we may ever delight in your Word and yield abundant fruit in our lives, through Jesus Christ, your Son our Lord. Amen.

**ORDER OF SERVICE**

**GATHERING RITE**

*Music begins playing underneath spoken word.*

M: We begin our worship in the same way we were baptized: In the name of the Father and of the Son ✠ and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION

M: Heavenly Father, you have blessed us with gifts to serve you and our neighbor. We repent for times we have used those gifts selfishly instead of generously and selflessly. Forgive us and let your peace rule our lives.

C: ♫ May the peace of God my Father Rule my life in everything,

That I may be calm to comfort Sick and sorrowing. (CW467:3)

M: Dear Savior Jesus, you have shown us the full extent of your love by giving your life for ours on the cross. Though that love is what ought to motivate our service, too often our service is grudgingly given, motivated by guilt and obligation, instead of generously given, motivated by your love. Forgive us and let your love fill our lives.

C: ♫ May the love of Jesus fill me As the waters fill the sea,

Him exalting self abasing – This is victory. (CW467:4)

M: O Holy Spirit, you want all people to be saved by the power of the Gospel. You also tell us that you use our Christian lives and service to lead them to hearing the Gospel. We are sorry when people see sin in our lives and not the good deeds you desire from us. Forgive us and live within us.

C: ♫ May his Spirit live within me As I seek the lost to win,

And may they forget the channel, Seeing only him. (CW467:6)

M: As a called servant of the Triune God, I announce to you his grace and forgiveness. On behalf of and by the command of our Savior Jesus Christ, I forgive you all of your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son ✠ and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**C: ♫ May the mind of Christ my Savior Live in me from day to day,**

**By his love and pow’r inspiring All I do or say.**

**May the Word of God dwell richly In my heart from hour to hour,**

**So that all may see I triumph Only through his pow’r. (CW467:1-2)**

M: We pray:

Almighty God, you sent your Son to become one of us to cleanse us and claim us. Give to us the same spirit of hospitality Jesus had to look on each stranger as someone you love, and therefore worthy of our time and concern; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

**C: ♫ May I run the race before me, Strong and brave to face the foe,**

**Looking only unto Jesus As I onward go. (CW467:5)**

*The rite of Holy Baptism may take place here.*

**OLD TESTAMENT READING Genesis 18:1-15**

*Abraham demonstrates a God-lived life, sacrificing hours and possessions to welcome   
strangers to his home. Led by God, we ought not hesitate to sacrifice for hospitality.*

The LORD appeared to Abraham near the great trees of Mamre while he was sitting at the entrance to his tent in the heat of the day. 2 Abraham looked up and saw three men standing nearby. When he saw them, he hurried from the entrance of his tent to meet them and bowed low to the ground.

3 He said, “If I have found favor in your eyes, my lord, do not pass your servant by. 4 Let a little water be brought, and then you may all wash your feet and rest under this tree. 5 Let me get you something to eat, so you can be refreshed and then go on your way—now that you have come to your servant.”

“Very well,” they answered, “do as you say.”

6 So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah. “Quick,” he said, “get three seahs of the finest flour and knead it and bake some bread.”

7 Then he ran to the herd and selected a choice, tender calf and gave it to a servant, who hurried to prepare it. 8 He then brought some curds and milk and the calf that had been prepared, and set these before them. While they ate, he stood near them under a tree.

9 “Where is your wife Sarah?” they asked him.

“There, in the tent,” he said.

10 Then one of them said, “I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife will have a son.”

Now Sarah was listening at the entrance to the tent, which was behind him. 11 Abraham and Sarah were already very old, and Sarah was past the age of childbearing. 12 So Sarah laughed to herself as she thought, “After I am worn out and my lord is old, will I now have this pleasure?”

13 Then the LORD said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh and say, ‘Will I really have a child, now that I am old?’ 14 Is anything too hard for the LORD? I will return to you at the appointed time next year, and Sarah will have a son.”

15 Sarah was afraid, so she lied and said, “I did not laugh.”

But he said, “Yes, you did laugh.”

**GOSPEL Matthew 9:9-13**

*Jesus shows ultimate hospitality in inviting the tax collector to follow him. Matthew   
responds with the God-lived life by inviting his friends to his house and to Jesus.*

9 As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector’s booth. “Follow me,” he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him.

10 While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew’s house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. 11 When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?”

12 On hearing this, Jesus said, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. 13 But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’ For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”

M: This is the Gospel of our Lord.

**C: Praise be to you, O Christ!**

**HYMN OF THE DAY** *BLEST BE THE TIE THAT BINDS* | **CW 494**

**SERMON Matthew 9:9-13**

***Eating with Sinners***

**CONFESSION OF FAITH *Apostles’ Creed***

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

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

**Amen.**

**OFFERING**

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

M: Lord Jesus Christ, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, you humbled yourself to be born of a virgin. You became one of us. Your hospitality knew and knows no bounds. You invited fishermen, a tax collector, people from all walks of life to be your disciples. You welcomed little children and took them up in your arms. You spoke to the woman at the well and offered her living water—forgiveness and life. Give us a rich measure of your Holy Spirit so that we take that same view of all people we meet. Lord in your mercy:

C: Hear our prayer.

M: Holy Spirit, you have turned our hearts from the darkness of sin and eternal death to the light of life and an eternity in heaven through Jesus Christ alone. You have given us eyes to see our Savior Jesus. Give us eyes to see each person we meet as one for whom our Savior died, and one God loves dearly. Give us the words to speak in love. Grow us in wisdom through our study of your word and grant us peace. Lord, in your mercy:

C: Hear our prayer.

M: Father, you created us and continue to provide and protect us. Give us the courage and trust to take you at your word. Your word tells us, “You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God” (2 Cor. 9). Give us the courage to be hospitable to others whether in the family of believers or those not yet in the family of believers. Protect and provide for us and let our generosity overflow to strangers. Lord, in your mercy:

C: Hear our prayer.

Special prayers and intercessions may follow.

M: Hear us, Lord, as we bring you our private petitions.

Silent prayer.

M: Accept our prayers and grant all we need, not because we are worthy, but for the sake of Jesus Christ who lived a perfect life in our place and died for our sins and was raised again. Amen.

Lord’s Prayer

C: 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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

*Holy Communion may be celebrated here. If so, the presiding minister will direct the congregation to the appropriate pages of Christian Worship or Christian Worship Supplement.*

**BIBLE STUDY**

**ACTS 2:42-47**

42 They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. 43 Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. 44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. 46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

**INTRODUCTION**

In general, Christians are viewed negatively by mainstream pop culture while Jesus is viewed positively. Why? What would it take to change that perception?

**INTO THE TEXT**

1. The early Christians devoted themselves to four things. Explain how each prompted the unity they needed to reflect Jesus to their community:

* Apostle’s teachings
* Fellowship
* Breaking of bread
* Prayer

2. Describe what your experience would have been if you were to visit this congregation

**APPLYING IT**

1. Hospitality is literally, “love of strangers,” in Greek. To loves strangers means that we as a church need to be outward focused. It is easy for churches to lose that perspective and focus on inward concerns. What are ways that our church could become too inward focused?

(i.e., How do we insure outward focus?)

2. The early church was “all for one and one for all!” They were generous with all of the gifts God had blessed them with. They were willing to share everything and others noticed. Come up with at least three ways our church can reflect that early Christians spirit of hospitality.

**BLESSING**

M: Brothers and sisters, go in peace.

Live in harmony with one another.

Serve the Lord with gladness.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

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

The Lord look on you with favor and give ✠ you peace.

**C: Amen.**

**CLOSING HYMN**  *IN UNITY AND PEACE* | **CWS 773**



WELS Congregational Services

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