

New Hope Lutheran Church  
Sixth Sunday of Easter  
May 5, 2024



## Introduction

This Sunday's image of the life the risen Christ shares with us is the image of friendship. We are called to serve others as Jesus came to serve; but for John's gospel, the image of servanthood is too hierarchical, too distant, to capture the essence of life with Christ. Friendship captures the love, the joy, the deep mutuality of the relationship into which Christ invites us. The Greeks believed that true friends are willing to die for each other. This is the mutual love of Christian community commanded by Christ and enabled by the Spirit.

## Acts 10:44-48

*While Peter shares the good news of Jesus with a Gentile soldier and his family, the Holy Spirit comes upon them. Recognizing that the Spirit works inclusively in the lives of both Jews and Gentiles, Peter commands that these Gentiles also be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.*

<sup>44</sup>While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word. <sup>45</sup>The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the

Gentiles, <sup>46</sup>for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter said, <sup>47</sup>“Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?” <sup>48</sup>So he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they invited him to stay for several days.

**Psalm: Psalm 98**

*Shout with joy to the LORD, all you lands. (Ps. 98:4)*

<sup>1</sup>Sing a new song to the LORD, who has done **l** marvelous things,  
whose right hand and holy arm have **l** won the victory.

<sup>2</sup>**O LORD, you have made **l** known your victory,  
you have revealed your righteousness in the sight **l** of the  
nations.**

<sup>3</sup>You remember your steadfast love and faithfulness to the **l** house of  
Israel;

all the ends of the earth have seen the victory **l** of our God.

<sup>4</sup>**Shout with joy to the LORD, **l** all you lands;  
lift up your voice, re- **l** jice, and sing. R**

<sup>5</sup>Sing to the LORD **l** with the harp,  
with the harp and the **l** voice of song.

<sup>6</sup>**With trumpets and the sound **l** of the horn  
shout with joy before the **l** king, the LORD.**

<sup>7</sup>Let the sea roar, and **l** all that fills it,  
the world and those who **l** dwell therein.

<sup>8</sup>**Let the rivers **l** clap their hands,  
and let the hills ring out with joy before the LORD, who comes  
to **l** judge the earth.**

<sup>9</sup>The LORD will judge the **l** world with righteousness  
and the peo- **l** ples with equity. **R**

**Second Reading: 1 John 5:1-6**

*God's children believe that Jesus is the Messiah and love God by keeping God's commandments. Thus the world is conquered not through military might but through love and faith.*

<sup>1</sup>Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the parent loves the child. <sup>2</sup>By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. <sup>3</sup>For the love of God is this, that we obey his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome, <sup>4</sup>for whatever is born of God conquers the world. And this is the victory that conquers the world, our faith. <sup>5</sup>Who is it that conquers the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

<sup>6</sup>This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ, not with the water only but with the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one that testifies, for the Spirit is the truth.

**Gospel: John 15:9-17**

*On the night of his arrest, Jesus delivers a final testimony to his disciples to help them in the days ahead. Here, he repeats the most important of all his commands, that they love one another.*

[Jesus said:] <sup>9</sup>As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. <sup>10</sup>If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. <sup>11</sup>I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

<sup>12</sup>This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. <sup>13</sup>No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's

friends. <sup>14</sup>You are my friends if you do what I command you. <sup>15</sup>I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. <sup>16</sup>You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. <sup>17</sup>I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.”