

St. Francis Episcopal Church
Dunellen, New Jersey

Pride Eucharist

June 16, 2024

10:00am



Cover art by Ryan Cagle (ryancagle@hey.com)

About Language

"Pray in the language of your heart." I first heard this liturgical direction used at a multilingual worship service right before we were to pray "The Lord's Prayer". When it comes to gender and identity, we readily acknowledge that a similar direction must be used. Languages change as do cultures and human experience. For instance, some historic language for God has not aged well, along with other metaphors in the Bible. Words like "king", "master", "slave", and even "lord", have become dated and problematic for some members of our faith communities. The same can be said of gendered language for God, including traditionally male pronouns and titles such as "father". The word and image of "father" may not be welcome by all. We affirm that God transcends human gender, regardless of the language we use. Any gendered reference to God in today's liturgy is not intended to be triggering or exclusionary, but is usually a result of tradition and texts, not of our direction. Therefore, we invite you to speak of and pray to God in the language of your own heart and experience, whatever words those may be.

-The Rev. D. Scott Russell, chair
The LGBTQ Commission of the Diocese of NJ

Processional Hymn:

The Hymnal 1982 #391

Opening Acclamation

Celebrant Blessed be God: most holy, glorious, and undivided Trinity.

People Blessed be God, now and forever. Amen.

Celebrant As we prepare to celebrate the mystery of God's love, revealed in Word and Sacrament, let us call to mind our sins.

Celebrant Most Merciful One, you are gracious and compassionate;

People Have mercy upon us.

Celebrant You are loving to all and your mercy is over all your creation;

People Have mercy upon us.

Celebrant You heal the brokenhearted and raise us to new life;

People Have mercy upon us.

Celebrant May our Compassionate God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins, through our Savior Jesus Christ, and strengthen you by the Holy Spirit to live in love. **Amen.**

Song of Praise

The Hymnal 1982 #S278

Collect of the Day

Celebrant May God be with you.

People And also with you.

Celebrant Let us pray.

Keep, O Lord, your household the Church in your steadfast faith and love, that through your grace we may proclaim your truth with boldness, and minister your justice with compassion; for the sake of our Savior Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Word of God

First Reading: A reading from the First Book of Samuel (15:34-16:13)

Samuel went to Ramah; and Saul went up to his house in Gibeah of Saul. Samuel did not see Saul again until the day of his death, but Samuel grieved over Saul. And the Lord was sorry that he had made Saul king over Israel.

The Lord said to Samuel, “How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons.” Samuel said, “How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me.” And the Lord said, “Take a heifer with you, and say, ‘I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.’ Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you.” Samuel did what the Lord commanded, and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, “Do you come peaceably?” He said, “Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the Lord; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice.” And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, “Surely the Lord’s anointed is now before the Lord.” But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the Lord does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.” Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. He said, “Neither has the Lord chosen this one.” Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, “Neither has the Lord chosen this one.” Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, “The Lord has not chosen any of these.” Samuel said to Jesse, “Are all your sons here?” And he said, “There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep.” And Samuel said to Jesse, “Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here.” He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. The Lord said, “Rise and anoint him; for this is the one.” Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

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

Psalm 20 *Exaudiat te Dominus*

- 1 May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble, *
the Name of the God of Jacob defend you;
- 2 Send you help from his holy place *
and strengthen you out of Zion;
- 3 Remember all your offerings *
and accept your burnt sacrifice;
- 4 Grant you your heart's desire *
and prosper all your plans.
- 5 We will shout for joy at your victory
and triumph in the Name of our God; *
may the Lord grant all your requests.
- 6 Now I know that the Lord gives victory to his anointed; *
**he will answer him out of his holy heaven,
with the victorious strength of his right hand.**
- 7 Some put their trust in chariots and some in horses, *
but we will call upon the Name of the Lord our God.
- 8 They collapse and fall down, *
but we will arise and stand upright.
- 9 O Lord, give victory to the king *
and answer us when we call.

Second Reading: A reading from the second letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians (5:6-10,[11-13],14-17)

We are always confident; even though we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord-- for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yes, we do have confidence, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. For all of us must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense for what has been done in the body, whether good or evil.

[Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we try to persuade others; but we ourselves are well known to God, and I hope that we are also well known to your consciences. We are not commending ourselves to you again, but giving you an opportunity to boast about us, so that you may be able to answer those who boast in outward appearance and not in the heart. For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you.]

For the love of Christ urges us on, because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died. And he died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them. From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!

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

Sequence Hymn

The Hymnal 1982 #621

The people stand as they are able.

Gospel

Celebrant The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark (4:26-34)
People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Jesus said, "The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come."

He also said, "With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade."

With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it; he did not speak to them except in parables, but he explained everything in private to his disciples.

Celebrant The Gospel of the Lord
People: **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

Sermon

The Rev. Ayden J. Petrone, LCSW

The Nicene Creed

All stand.

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: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man.

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 and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He 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

Leader Gracious God, you created humankind in your image and blessed us with the capacity to love. We especially thank you for the gift of diverse sexualities and gender identities, especially those of our Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Queer siblings, whose identities reflect your multi-faceted likeness.

We pray for Michael, our Presiding Bishop; Sally, our diocesan bishop; Sally, and all those who minister in your name. Send your Spirit to lead your Church into your Way of Love. We repent of the ways the Church has harmed our LGBTQ+ siblings and we recommit to making the Church a place of refuge and blessing for all people. Gracious God,

People Hear our prayer.

Leader We ask your guidance for all who bear the authority of government, especially Joseph our President, and Phil our Governor. Grant us discernment and courage as we dismantle systems of oppression and build a world rooted in justice and peace. Gracious God,

People Hear our prayer.

Leader We ask for healing and wholeness to those who experience oppression, trauma, dysphoria, addiction, or illness, including those living with HIV/AIDS. Fill us with the grace to receive all who look to you for their salvation. Gracious God,

People Hear our prayer.

Leader We ask that your righteous judgement reign here and now. Grant us the courage to protect and support those who are most vulnerable among us: transgender youth, all women, Black, Brown, and Indigenous people, and any who struggle for safety, respect, and belonging. Gracious God,

People Hear our prayer.

Leader Bless chosen and found families that have become relationships of care and support for those who have been rejected from their families of origin. May they embody your compassionate grace which you freely give to all your beloved. Gracious God,

People Hear our prayer.

Leader Stir up in us a care for the earth, for all plants and animals. Embolden us to honor your goodness in ourselves and in one another. Gracious God,

People Hear our prayer.

Leader We thank you for the witness of Queer Elders and Allies who have gone before us, who dared to envision a world of radical inclusion. We remember all who have fought and died to advance equity for your LGBTQ+ children in the church, in this country, and around the world, and we pray for those who continue the work of justice. Gracious God,

People Hear our prayer.

Celebrant Gracious God, accept the prayers of your people. Grant us the grace and courage to love all your children as they are, including our enemies. Lead us with courage to continually advocate for people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions, just as your Holy Spirit advocates for us. These prayers we offer in the name of Jesus, your beloved. *Amen.*

The Peace

Celebrant The peace of God be always with you.
People **And also with you.**

Welcome and Announcements

The Holy Communion

Offertory Sentence

The Priest says: Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving and make good your vows to the Most High. (Psalm 50:14)

Offertory Hymn

Doxology

The Hymnal 1982 #380 v3

Celebrant All things come of thee, O lord.
People **And of Thine own we have given Thee.**

The Great Thanksgiving

Celebrant God our sustainer, receive the gifts we bring before you, and feed us continually with that bread which gives abundant life to all, our Savior Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Celebrant May God be with you.
People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.
People **We lift them to God.**

Celebrant: Let us give thanks to the Triune God.
People **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Celebrant It is truly right to praise you, Fountain of life and Source of all being,
through
Jesus Christ our Savior, through whom we are all accepted as members of your beloved community. Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we lift our voices in one chorus of praise as we sing:

Sanctus

The Hymnal 1982 S125

Then the Celebrant continues

Most Holy God, you loved us from before time, and made us in your image to show the beauty of your glory in the world. You called us your children and welcomed us into your family. But we would not share the love that had been given to us. We rejected those who were different from us and excluded those we believed to be unworthy of your love.

Yet, you did not abandon us: You sent Jesus, your Eternal Word, born of the Holy Spirit and our sister Mary, to reveal our true humanity, to reconcile us to you and to one another, and to call us to return to the way of love. Jesus befriended outcasts and welcomed the stranger, and with a love stronger than death, embraced us all with your compassionate mercy and liberating grace.

On the night before Jesus suffered with us, he took bread, gave you thanks, and said, “this is my body which is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

Likewise, after supper had ended, Jesus took a cup of wine. Again he gave you thanks and praise, and said, “this is my blood which is shed for you. Do this as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

Therefore, we offer you, O Merciful One, this bread and this cup as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died;
Christ is risen;
Christ will come again.**

Send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts, that they may be for us the life-giving body and blood of our Savior Jesus Christ, and grant that all who share in these holy mysteries may receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit, that we may be strengthened as members of the body of Christ to work for justice and peace in the world.

And at the last day, gather us with the Most Blessed Mother of God, with St. Mary Magdalene and all the apostles, with Saints Sergius and Bacchus, Saints Felicity and Perpetua and all the holy martyrs, with St. Aelred of Rievaulx, Blessed Madre Juana de la Cruz and all your saints, into that place, where beholding the splendor of your radiance, we will dwell in the eternal bliss of your love.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory are yours, O loving Creator, Mother and Father of us all, for ever and ever.

The People respond: AMEN.

Lord's Prayer

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

People and Celebrant

**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.**

The Breaking of the Bread

Fraction Anthem

The Hymnal 1982 #154

The Priest invites the people to Communion.

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.

*Christians of all ages are welcome to make their Communion at the altar of St. Francis.
If you do not wish to receive the Wine, please cross your arms over your chest as you kneel at the rail after you have received the Bread. Gluten-free wafers are available. Ask for one at the altar rail.*

Communion Hymn

The Hymnal 1982 #620

The Prayer of St. Francis (sung)

*Make me a Channel of your peace.
Where there is hatred,
let me bring your love.
Where there is injury, your pardon,
Lord,
And where there's doubt, true faith in
you.*

*Make me a channel of your peace.
Where there's despair in life, let me
bring hope.
Where there is darkness, only light,*

and where there's sadness, ever joy.

*Oh, Master, grant that I may never seek
so much to be consoled as to console.
To be understood as to understand.
To be loved as to love with all my soul.*

*Make me a channel of your peace.
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
in giving of ourselves that we receive,
And in dying that we're born to eternal
life.*

Post-communion Prayer

Celebrant and People

Faithful God in the wonder of your wisdom and love you fed your people in the wilderness with the bread of angels, and you sent Jesus to be the bread of life. We thank you for feeding us with this bread. May it strengthen us that by the power of the Holy Spirit we may embody your will and desire and be renewed for your service through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen

Blessing

Celebrant Live without fear: Your creator has made you holy, Has always protected you, And loves you as a mother. Go in peace to follow the good road And may God's blessing be with you always.

Recessional Hymn

The Hymnal 1982 #209

Dismissal

Celebrant Go in peace, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.
People **Thanks be to God.**

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