

# HEAR WHAT THE SPIRIT IS SAYING

In Scripture and Prayer and The Great Cloud of Witnesses

Week of June 26, 2022

## *Collect for Proper 8*

Almighty God, you have built your Church upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone: Grant us so to be joined together in unity of spirit by their teaching, that we may be made a holy temple acceptable to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen. BCP 230

## **1 Kings 19:15-16, 19-21** NRSVue, 2021

<sup>15</sup>Then the Lord said to him, “Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus; when you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael as king over Aram.\* <sup>16</sup>Also you shall anoint Jehu son of Nimshi as king over Israel, and you shall anoint Elisha son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah as prophet in your place.\*

<sup>19</sup>So he set out from there and found Elisha son of Shaphat, who was plowing. There were twelve yoke of oxen ahead of him, and he was with the twelfth. Elijah passed by him and threw his mantle over him.\* <sup>20</sup>He left the oxen, ran after Elijah, and said, “Let me kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow you.” Then Elijah said to him, “Go back again, for what have I done to you?”\* <sup>21</sup>He returned from following him, took the yoke of oxen, and slaughtered them; using the equipment from the oxen, he boiled their flesh and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he set out and followed Elijah and became his servant.\*

## **Galatians 5:1, 13-25** NRSVue, 2021

<sup>1</sup>For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.\*

<sup>13</sup>For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters, only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, [Gk *the flesh*] but through love become enslaved to one another.\* <sup>14</sup>For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”\* <sup>15</sup>If, however, you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another.

<sup>16</sup>Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh.\* <sup>17</sup>For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want.\* <sup>18</sup>But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not subject to the law.\* <sup>19</sup>Now the works of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity, debauchery,\* <sup>20</sup>idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, <sup>21</sup>envy, [Other ancient authorities add *murder*] drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.\*

## 2

<sup>22</sup>By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness,\* <sup>23</sup>gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. <sup>24</sup>And those who belong to Christ [Other ancient authorities read *Christ Jesus*] have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.\* <sup>25</sup>If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit. <sup>26</sup>Let us not become conceited, competing against one another, envying one another.

### **Luke 9:51-62** NRSVue, 2021

<sup>51</sup>When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem.\* <sup>52</sup>And he sent messengers ahead of him. On their way they entered a village of the Samaritans to prepare for his arrival,\* <sup>53</sup>but they did not receive him because his face was set toward Jerusalem. <sup>54</sup>When his disciples James and John saw this, they said, “Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?” [Other ancient authorities add *as Elijah did*],\* <sup>55</sup>But he turned and rebuked them. <sup>56</sup>Then [Other ancient authorities read *rebuked them, and said, “You do not know what spirit you are of, <sup>56</sup>for the Son of Man has not come to destroy the lives of humans but to save them.”* Then] they went on to another village.

<sup>57</sup>As they were going along the road, someone said to him, “I will follow you wherever you go.” <sup>58</sup>And Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.” <sup>59</sup>To another he said, “Follow me.” But he said, “Lord, first let me go and bury my father.”\* <sup>60</sup>And Jesus [Gk *he*] said to him, “Let the dead bury their own dead, but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God.” <sup>61</sup>Another said, “I will follow you, Lord, but let me first say farewell to those at my home.” <sup>62</sup>And Jesus said to him, “No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.”

### **Psalms 16** NRSVue, 2021

- 1 Protect me, O God, for in you I take refuge.\*
- 2 I say to the Lord, “You are my Lord; I have no good apart from you.”
- 3 As for the holy ones in the land,  
they are the noble ones in whom is all my delight.\*
- 4 Those who choose another god multiply their sorrows;  
their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out  
or take their names upon my lips.\*
- 5 The Lord is my chosen portion and my cup; you hold my lot.\*
- 6 The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places;  
I have a goodly heritage.\*
- 7 I bless the Lord, who gives me counsel;  
in the night also my heart instructs me.\*
- 8 I keep the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand,  
I shall not be moved.\*

- 9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices;  
my body also rests secure.\*
- 10 For you do not give me up to Sheol or let your faithful one see the Pit.\*
- 11 You show me the path of life. In your presence there is fullness of joy;  
in your right hand are pleasures forevermore.\*

## Supplemental Resources

### Commentary on Galatians 5:1, 13-25

*By Carla Swafford Works a Professor of New Testament at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C.*

Through Christ, we have been set free to serve one another in love. Though Paul’s metaphorical use of slavery is jarring, there is truth behind the metaphor. The cross teaches us what love looks like, and the work of God’s Spirit in us is the only way that we are ever going to be free from our own selfishness to exhibit a fraction of that kind of love toward anyone—let alone people whom we do not like.

At this point in Paul’s passion-filled letter he is deep in his argument against his opponents. After Paul has left the region, other teachers have come to the area, preaching the need for the Galatians to follow the law as the first sign of obedience in their newfound faith in Christ. Most likely, the opponents are promoting food practices and circumcision, since those are the issues mentioned explicitly in this letter (2:11-21; 5:2-12; 6:12-15).

Apparently, the teachers have claimed that the law is the vehicle of God’s Spirit (3:1-5). The law, according to Paul, however, has another function—to point out transgressions (3:19). If the law could have been created that guaranteed life, then God would have created that law (3:21). To submit to the “yoke of slavery” in 5:1 is to return to a system in which one places trust in obedience to the law. It is also a distortion of thinking about what the law can do.

For Paul the law is a guide in the darkness, a path toward justice in the “present evil age” (1:4). The holy, just, and good law (Romans 7:12), though, cannot defeat the power of sin. To trust in the law to do so is misguided. Sin has tarnished all—even God’s good creation. In 5:16-25, it is clear that there is a constant battle between the flesh that has been corrupted by this superpower of sin, and the Spirit that is at work transforming and redeeming. The vice list associated with the flesh is fairly typical of vice lists of the day and, while not intended to be exhaustive, is overwhelming. The flesh is “under the realm of the law” (5:18). The law exists because the flesh has been corrupted by sin.

The realm of the Spirit, though, is the realm of God's new creation. It is "the kingdom of God" (5:21), a phrase rarely used in Paul's letters but common to the Gospels. It is the inbreaking of God's reign into life in the present. Again, the fruit of the Spirit is not intended to be an exhaustive list, but it is impressive nonetheless—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Why does Paul mention these tangible markers of the Spirit's work in this letter? The Galatian believers are eager to take the next faithful steps in their faith journeys. They have welcomed these opposing teachers and their message—a message that Paul has labeled a distortion of the gospel, but that the church did not have enough training to discern as harmful. Adult men wanted to be circumcised to show their faith in Christ. People were willing to adopt new food practices to show their piety. They wanted tangible markers of their new existence in Christ.

Choosing circumcision is a big commitment, and a one-time act. It would publicly link the Galatians to the Jewish people and to their God—to the same God of their beloved leader Paul. It would be tempting to have a public marker of one's faith journey. On the other hand—if the Galatians remain true to Paul's gospel, the Spirit's work is a process.

Paul is reminding them that the Spirit is at work transforming them into a new creation—into people who are more loving, gentle, and kind. Their transformation is tangible, and it is holistic—not confined to genitalia or table practices.

We often place the list of 5:22-23 into a spiritual gifts inventory, but that grossly misses the point. Paul uses the word "fruit" in the singular. In other words, the result of the Spirit's work is all of the above and more. We don't get to pick and choose and neither do the Galatians.

So how will the Galatians know that they are indeed a people being transformed—a people of the promise, children of God, clothed in Christ? Because they are a people who bear one another's burdens, love one another, as Christ has loved them. They are a people whose actions are marked by the shape of the cross rather than their own selfish desires. They are fulfilling the intention of the law—to love their neighbors.

Is there a place for the law then in this new faith in Christ? For Paul, Christ has fulfilled the law by embodying what the love of neighbor looks like. In Galatians 5:14, he writes, "For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" Thankfully, neither the Galatians' salvation nor our own rests on our ability to fulfill that commandment. We are called, however, to follow in Christ's footsteps—to love one another.

Paul will end this letter with a reminder that new creation is everything (6:15). God’s work of renewal through the resurrected Christ is the good news—not the law, and the Spirit is the very vehicle of that renewal. And the great news is that God’s Holy Spirit—that Great Change Agent—is at work among the Galatians even now. They are part of God’s new creation. They do not need to go back and place their trust in the law as an entry ticket to God’s cosmic salvation. They have nothing short of God’s Spirit at work among them, and as evidence of that Spirit, look at all that the Spirit has already managed to accomplish ... just look at this fruit! The Great Change Agent is still working and still transforming.

Two thousand years later, God hasn’t given up on us. There is evidence of the Spirit’s work all around us in these days of Pentecost. Praise be to God.

Working Preacher, June 26, 2010, <https://bit.ly/Learn163> accessed June 6, 2022

## Sit and rest...

### Fruit of the Spirit

How does the Spirit of God manifest itself through us? Often we think that to witness means to speak up in defense of God. This idea can make us very self-conscious. We wonder where and how we can make God the topic of our conversations and how to convince our families, friends, neighbors, and colleagues of God’s presence in their lives. But this explicit missionary endeavor often comes from an insecure heart and, therefore, easily creates divisions.

The way God’s Spirit manifests itself most convincingly is through its fruit: “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, trustfulness, gentleness and self-control” (Galatians 5:22). These fruit speak for themselves. It is, therefore, always better to raise the question “How can I grow in the Spirit?” than the question “How can I make others believe in the Spirit?”

Nouwen, Henri J. M.. *Bread for the Journey: A Daybook of Wisdom and Faith* (p. 178, June 19). HarperCollins. Kindle Edition.

### Good Works

If good works are not the cause of salvation, they are nonetheless the mark and effect of it. If the forgiven man does not become forgiving, the loved man loving, then he is only deceiving himself. “You shall know them by their fruits,” Jesus says, and here Gentle Jesus Meek and Mild becomes Christ the Tiger, becomes both at once, this stern and loving man. “Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire,” he says, and Saint Paul is only echoing him when he writes to the Galatians,

“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such there is no law.”

Buechner, Frederick. *Listening to Your Life: Daily Meditations with Frederick Buechner*. HarperCollins. Kindle Edition.

## Collect for Seventh Sunday After Epiphany

○ Lord you have taught us that without love whatever we do is worth nothing: Send your Holy Spirit and pour into our hearts your greatest gift, which is love, the true bond of peace and of all virtue, without which whoever lives is accounted dead before you. Grant this for the sake of your only Son Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen. BCP 216

***If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit.***

Galatians 5:25

## Two prayers by Eric Milner-White 1884-1963

*Note: Eric Milner-White was a British Anglican priest, academic, and decorated military chaplain. He was a founder of the Oratory of the Good Shepherd, an Anglican dispersed community, and served as its superior between 1923 and 1938. From 1941 to 1963, he was the Dean of York in the Church of England. For more see the [Wikipedia entry](#)*

○ Holy Spirit,  
 Giver of light and life,  
 impart to us thoughts higher than our own thoughts,  
 and prayers better than our own prayers,  
 and powers beyond our own powers,  
 that we may spend and be spent  
 in the ways of love and goodness,  
 after the perfect image  
 of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

○ God, the Holy Spirit,  
 come to us, and among us:  
 come as the wind, and cleanse us;  
 come as the fire, and burn;  
 come as the dew, and refresh:  
 convict, convert, and consecrate  
 many hearts and lives  
 to our great good  
 and thy greater glory  
 and this we ask for Jesus Christ's sake.

Eric Milner-White quoted in George Appleton, Ed., *The Oxford Book of Prayer* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1985) entries 515 and 516

# Spiritual Day Hike

In the landscape where Spirit & World intersect



Week of June 26, 2022

## This Week's Holy Women and Men (Witnesses to inspire us)

*Commemorations in the Episcopal Church are listed in the Book of Common Prayer (BCP), in Lesser Feasts and Fasts (LFF), and in a Great Cloud of Witnesses (GCoW).*

*Here are the Holy Women and Men remembered this week:*

- Jun 26 [Isabel Florence Hapgood](#), Ecumenist, 1923 *LFF*  
Jun 27.....[Cornelius Hill](#), Priest and Chief among the Oneida, 1907 *GCoW*  
Jun 28.....[Irenaeus of Lyons](#), Bishop and Theologian, c.202 *LFF*  
Jun 29.....**The Apostles Saint Peter and Saint Paul** *BCP*  
Jul 01.....[Pauli Murray](#), Priest, 1985 *LFF*  
Jul 01.....[Harriet Beecher Stowe](#), Writer and Prophetic Witness, 1896 *GCoW*  
Jul 02.....[Moses the Black](#), Monastic and Martyr, c.400 *LFF*  
Jul 02.....[Walter Rauschenbusch, 1918, Washington Gladden, 1918, and Jacob Riis, 1914](#), Prophetic Witnesses *GCoW*

## June 26: Isabel Florence Hapgood, Ecumenist

Isabel Hapgood, a lifelong and faithful Episcopalian, was a force behind ecumenical relations between Episcopalians and Russian Orthodoxy in the United States around the turn of the twentieth century. Born in Massachusetts on November 21st, 1851, Hapgood was a superior student with a particular talent for the study of languages. In addition to the standard fare of the time—Latin and French—she also mastered most of the Romance and Germanic languages of Europe as well as Russian, Polish, and Church Slavonic. She possessed the particular gift of being able to translate the subtleties of Russian into equally nuanced English. Her translations made the works of Dostoyevsky, Tolstoy, Gorky, and Chekov, among others, available to English readers.

Between 1887-1889, Hapgood traveled extensively through Russia. That visit cemented a lifelong love of Russia, its language and culture, and particularly the Russian Orthodox Church. She would make return visits to Russia almost every year for the rest of her life.

Her love of Russian Orthodoxy and its Divine Liturgy led her to seek the permission of the hierarchy to translate the rites into English. Hapgood's already established reputation as a sensitive translator certainly contributed, but in the meantime she had developed close relationships with Russian clergy and musicians at all levels. The work, *Service Book of the Holy*

## 2

Orthodox-Catholic Church, took eleven years to complete. It received support of the Russian Orthodox bishops in North America, particularly Archbishop Tikhon, who was later to give Hapgood's work a second blessing when he became Patriarch of Moscow.

Isabel Florence Hapgood is faithfully remembered among Russian Orthodox Christians in North America for her contribution to their common life, her desire for closer relations between Orthodox and Anglican Christians, and for her making the liturgical treasures of their tradition available to the English-speaking world.

She died on June 26th, 1928.

*Lesser Feasts and Fasts, 2018*

### *Collect for the Commemoration*

Teach your divided church, O God, to look upon one another with a holy envy, to see what is good and right in our separate traditions, and to continually seek the unity that you desire for all your people. Grant that we, following the example of your servant Isabel Florence Hapgood, may love our sisters and brothers in Christ unselfishly and labor generously for their wellbeing, seeking not our own good but the good of others. Through the same Christ our Lord, who prayed that his church might be one. Amen.

## **June 29: The Apostles Saint Peter and Saint Paul**

Peter and Paul, the two greatest leaders of the early church, are commemorated separately, Peter on January 18, for his confession of Jesus as the Messiah, and Paul on January 25, for his conversion, but they are commemorated together on June 29 in observance of the tradition of the Church that they both died as martyrs in Rome during the persecution under Nero in 64.

Paul, the well-educated and cosmopolitan Jew of the diaspora, and Peter, the uneducated fisherman from Galilee, had differences of opinion in the early years of the church concerning the mission to the Gentiles. More than once, Paul speaks of rebuking Peter for his continued insistence on Jewish exclusiveness; yet their common commitment to Christ and the proclamation of the Gospel proved stronger than their differences; and both eventually carried that mission to Rome, where they were martyred. According to tradition, Paul was granted the right of a Roman citizen to be beheaded by a sword, but Peter suffered the fate of his Lord, crucifixion, though with head downward.

A generation after their martyrdom, Clement of Rome, writing to the church in Corinth, probably in the year 96 says: "Let us come to those who

have most recently proved champions; let us take up the noble examples of our own generation. Because of jealousy and envy the greatest and most upright pillars of the church were persecuted and competed unto death. Let us bring before our eyes the good apostles—Peter, who because of unrighteous jealousy endured not one or two, but numerous trials, and so bore a martyr’s witness and went to the glorious place that he deserved. Because of jealousy and strife Paul pointed the way to the reward of endurance; seven times he was imprisoned, he was exiled, he was stoned, he was a preacher in both East and West, and won renown for his faith, teaching uprightness to the whole world, and reaching the farthest limit of the West, and bearing a martyr’s witness before the rulers, he passed out of the world and was taken up into the holy place, having proved a very great example of endurance.”

*Lesser Feasts and Fasts, 2018*

## **July 1: Harriett Beecher Stowe, Writer and Prophetic Witness**

Harriet Beecher Stowe was born on June 14, 1811, and from an early age was influenced by the humanitarian efforts of her famous parents. Her father, Lyman Beecher, was known for his zealous preaching and involvement with the temperance movement, while her mother, Roxana Foote Beecher, ran a school for girls and publicly advocated for the intellectual development of women. Her sister Catharine led the women’s opposition against the Jackson administration’s Indian Removal Bill.

Harriet Beecher Stowe was an outspoken critic of slavery, an institution that she believed to be fundamentally incompatible with the theology of her Calvinist upbringing. An author of many works, she is justly famous for her novel *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (1852), a sermonlike work that chronicled the life of a slave family in the south. In particular, it recounted the tragic consequences of slavery on families, consequences that were for Stowe to be counted as one of the worst evils of slavery. *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* was the bestselling book of the nineteenth century, and was influential in both America and Britain.

Stowe’s book inspired anti-slavery movements in the North and provoked widespread anger in the South. Her work intensified the sectional conflicts that would eventually lead to the Civil War. Abraham Lincoln, upon meeting Harriet Beecher Stowe, was alleged to have said, “So this is the little lady who started this great war!”

Stowe’s book, together with her public anti-slavery work, was largely responsible for bringing the evils of slavery to light not only in America, but in Britain, Europe, even Russia. Tolstoy greatly esteemed her work and

## 4

her moral courage, heaping lavish praise on her. She was renowned then, as now, for her boldness and willingness to expose the harsh realities of slavery to the public eye.

She died in Hartford, Connecticut on July 1, 1896.

*A Great Cloud of Witnesses, 2018*

### *Collect for the Commemoration*

Gracious God, we thank you for the witness of Harriett Beecher Stowe, whose fiction inspired thousands with compassion for the shame and sufferings of enslaved peoples, and who enriched her writings with the cadences of the Book of Common Prayer. Help us, like her, to strive for your justice, that our eyes may see the glory of your Son, Jesus Christ, when he comes to reign with you and the Holy Spirit in reconciliation and peace, one God, now and always. Amen.

## July 2: Moses the Black

Moses of Ethiopia, commonly called Moses the Black in early Christian literature, was a 4th century monk who lived in one of several isolated desert monasteries near Scete in Lower Egypt. He was described as being tall, strong, “black of body,” and in his early life, the hot-blooded leader of a marauding robber band. While fleeing from the authorities, he took shelter with a group of monks. He was so impressed with their faithfulness and kindness that he chose to be baptized and to remain with them.

He led an ascetic life, lived in a simple cell, and ate only ten ounces of dry bread each day. Once, when the monks gathered to judge a member who had sinned, Moses arrived carrying a leaky basket filled with sand on his back. He explained that what he was holding behind him represented his own many sins, now hidden from his own view. “And now I have come to judge my brother for a small fault,” he remarked. The other monks then each personally forgave their erring brother and returned to their cells.

It is to Moses that one of the most famous pieces of advice from desert monasticism is attributed: “Go, sit in your cell, and your cell will teach you everything.”

When Moses was an old man, he was warned that an armed band of raiders was approaching and that the monks needed to flee. “Those who live by the sword shall die by the sword” (Matthew 26:52), the former robber-murderer calmly replied. “I have been waiting for this day to come for a long time.” He and six other brothers waited patiently, and were all slain.

*Lesser Feasts and Fasts, 2018*

