

Home Service for June 28, 2026

Welcome and Announcements

You may also find listening to some of your favorite hymns helpful in worship.

In Christ Jesus, all are welcome here. Welcome, people of God!

Call to Worship:

When the Lord seems far away, may we place our faith in God.

When God's face is hidden from us, may we put our trust in God's steadfast love.

When our souls bear the pain of earthly trials, may we seek God's strength, lest we break.

Let us place our trust in God's goodness and mercy. Our hearts rejoice in God's salvation.

Opening Prayer:

God of pain and suffering, embrace us in our need. As we enter this house of worship, you know our deepest needs, and you help us embrace our sincerest hopes. Live in us this day, and quicken our spirits, that we may rise above the storms that threaten to overcome us. We ask this the name of the one who came to bring us abundant life. Amen.

Prayer of Confession:

Merciful God, as we travel the difficult paths of life, it is easy to forget that you are always there, even when we feel abandoned and alone. Help us move beyond our anguish, Holy One, that we might set aside our self-absorption, even as we seek your salvation. Lead us in the ways of life, for we yearn to feel your presence amid our deepest despair. Elevate our hearts and minds above our fear and doubt, that we may embrace your grace and mercy. Amen.

Words of Assurance:

Even amid seasons of doubt and grief, God offers us eternal life through the love of Christ Jesus, our Lord.

Read Psalm 13

How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever?

How long will you hide your face from me?

² How long must I wrestle with my thoughts
and day after day have sorrow in my heart?
How long will my enemy triumph over me?
³ Look on me and answer, Lord my God.
Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death,
⁴ and my enemy will say, "I have overcome him,"
and my foes will rejoice when I fall.
⁵ But I trust in your unfailing love;
my heart rejoices in your salvation.
⁶ I will sing the Lord's praise,
for he has been good to me.

Prayers of the People:

Lord, we talk so easily about being a friendly church. We like to think of ourselves as a place where everyone is welcomed. But our welcome should not stay confined to these walls. We are called to adopt attitudes of hospitality to others who may not return the favor. We are called to be willing to take the risk of hospitality in our workplace, our homes, our community, everywhere we go. You reached out to people in all kinds of conditions. Many of those people had been rejected by their society, their families. They were in need of compassionate greeting and friendship. Lord Jesus, as you have welcomed us regardless of our faults and failings, let us also be a welcoming presence to all in your name. We trust that you have heard our prayers today and every day, may you watch over all those whose names we have brought before you. Grant us new life in the Spirit this very day, we pray! In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day, our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever and ever. AMEN

Read the Old Testament Lesson: Genesis 22:1-14

Some time later God tested Abraham. He said to him, "Abraham!"
"Here I am," he replied.

² Then God said, “Take your son, your only son, whom you love—Isaac—and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on a mountain I will show you.”

³ Early the next morning Abraham got up and loaded his donkey. He took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. When he had cut enough wood for the burnt offering, he set out for the place God had told him about. ⁴ On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. ⁵ He said to his servants, “Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. We will worship and then we will come back to you.”

⁶ Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and placed it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. As the two of them went on together, ⁷ Isaac spoke up and said to his father Abraham, “Father?”

“Yes, my son?” Abraham replied.

“The fire and wood are here,” Isaac said, “but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?”

⁸ Abraham answered, “God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son.” And the two of them went on together.

⁹ When they reached the place God had told him about, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood on it. He bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. ¹⁰ Then he reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. ¹¹ But the angel of the Lord called out to him from heaven, “Abraham! Abraham!”

“Here I am,” he replied.

¹² “Do not lay a hand on the boy,” he said. “Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son.”

¹³ Abraham looked up and there in a thicket he saw a ram^[a] caught by its horns. He went over and took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of his son. ¹⁴ So Abraham called that place The Lord Will Provide. And to this day it is said, “On the mountain of the Lord it will be provided.”

Read the Epistle Lesson: Romans 6:12-23

¹² Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. ¹³ Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. ¹⁴ For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.

¹⁵ What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace? By no means! ¹⁶ Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? ¹⁷ But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance. ¹⁸ You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.

¹⁹ I am using an example from everyday life because of your human limitations. Just as you used to offer yourselves as slaves to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer yourselves as slaves to righteousness leading to holiness. ²⁰ When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. ²¹ What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! ²² But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in ^[a] Christ Jesus our Lord.

Read the Gospel Lesson: Matthew 10:40-42

“Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. ⁴¹ Whoever welcomes a prophet as a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and whoever welcomes a righteous person as a righteous person will receive a righteous person's reward. ⁴² And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward.”

Message

Today I want to look at showing the love of God through our own caring and loving actions toward others. Sometimes it is the simplest acts of kindness that have the most lasting effects. Sometimes ordinary things impact people in extraordinary ways. Even the smallest, seemingly insignificant act of love or mercy could have a lasting impact upon someone else.

In Matthew 10:42, Jesus speaks of sharing a cup of water. He is not speaking of just sharing a drink with someone. He is talking about sharing ourselves; the practicality of living a Christian life; a life full of relationships, both with God and with our fellow men and women. He is talking about the humble act of giving a

piece of ourselves to others. He is talking about sharing in practical ways and not just in abstract terms.

Sometimes thinking outside of the box to help someone else can grant the greatest rewards. Sometimes, caring for others is more important than caring for ourselves. Today's message is about sharing with and caring for our fellow human beings. Showing God's love through the simplest of acts can have impacts far beyond our wildest dreams. Jesus when he speaks of sharing a cup of cold water is speaking of the practicality of living the Christian life. Christianity and our relationship with God is personal, but it is not meant to be private. Our life with God is a life that is designed to touch others in practical ways.

A cold cup of water may seem like a small thing. In fact, it is. This may be precisely the point. Even the smallest, seemingly insignificant act of love or mercy could have a lasting impact upon someone else. Whether it be satisfying the thirst of one of these little ones, extending hugs to unsuspecting strangers, or lending a listening ear to a neighbor in need. Sometimes we make being a disciple of Jesus too difficult. Too grandiose. We imagine sidewalk-conversions and Billy Graham crusades. But discipleship can include much smaller displays of Jesus' love toward others.

We are not to look to be rewarded for doing good deeds, but that simple deeds can produce larger results than we expect. Simple acts can show the love of God through our actions. Acts of kindness can be contagious. Everyday there is a situation that a simple act of kindness can help with. Sometimes, a simple act becomes contagious and encourage more people share their own love with their fellow men.

Do the small thing to show the main thing of God's love at work. We never fully know what small act of kindness will touch and transform a life. I love the story about how John Bowes, chairman of the parent company of the maker of Frisbees, once participated in a charity effort. He sent thousands of the plastic flying discs to an orphanage in Angola, Africa. He thought the children there would enjoy playing with them.

Several months later, a representative of his company visited the orphanage. One of the nuns thanked him for the wonderful "plates" that his company had sent them. She told him the children were eating off the Frisbees, carrying water with them, and even catching fish with them, totally not what was expected. When the representative explained how the Frisbees were intended to be used, the nun was even more delighted that the children would also be able to enjoy them as toys.

You never fully know how a life will be touched by a small act of kindness, but God does.

By starting with one person, a few can be touched, then a community, then a city, then a nation and even a world. Through our simple acts of kindness, we have the capability to show God's love to a great many people. In ordinary situations sometimes we find extraordinary results. But sometimes, kindness is part of our everyday routine. Sometimes an act of kindness is also a labor of love, when that happens these ordinary events can also produce extraordinary results.

You see, there are opportunities all around us to show God's love through us. These acts do not need to be complex. These acts do not have to be extraordinary. These acts can be the normal, everyday events. No matter how simple or complex, no matter how ordinary or unique we always have the opportunity to show the love of Christ through simple acts of kindness. Many times, I am asked by nursing home residents, "What can I do to share the Gospel when I am here?" I always remind them that smiling and saying thank you to a worker will make that worker's day better and improve their outlook. And when the worker is having a better day, they can provide better care to all clients. So, your act of kindness with a simple smile can make so many others' day better and that is sharing God's love, sharing the Gospel.

Service based on showing God's love is not based on who we are, but who Jesus is through us. God loves us in so many ways. He feeds us, clothes us, provides for our physical needs. He also gives us strength when times are tough and comforts us when we experience loss. He is there when we succeed and when we fail. He shows this unprecedented love through the sacrifice of his Son for us. His grace is our reward.

But sometimes it might be hard to reflect that love that God has for us. Sometimes we might find it difficult even to smile, let alone serve. Sometimes, what we do might seem inadequate, especially when compared to the sacrifices Christ made for us. Let us never forget that just a smile can turn another person's day around. The challenge is that sometimes we try to love under our own power, but the power to share Jesus in practical ways comes from Christ. Paul knew this. Even when imprisoned, he knew and experienced the power of Christ at work. That is why he told the Philippians and us in Philippians 4:13, I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. We can show God's love for us through our actions. We can serve by accepting that Jesus served us first.

This service and sacrifice led to our salvation. But it is not by our power or any action we perform. It is by the service of Jesus Christ and the sacrifice He made for

each of us. We get into heaven not by what we do, but by what Christ has done for us. The power of the life we live in love toward God and others flows out of God working in our hearts.

So, what can we learn about sharing a cup of cold water? Let the love that God has for you and me reflect in our actions. We are important and God showed just how important we are with his tremendous sacrifice. Jesus was a servant and we can and should reflect that in our own actions. Remember Jesus was a carpenter. He faced the ordinary trials of life in the market, in the town, on the roads and in the temple. He tackled each of ordinary situations in extraordinary ways because all of his actions showed the love of God. He used the usual situations of daily living to show the unusual caring nature of our heavenly Father. Just as our heavenly Father first loved us and demonstrated service through His Son Jesus, we too can show that love in simple acts of kindness. Accept freely the act of grace that God has bestowed upon us and freely share it with those around each of us.

As I was finally finishing this sermon and trying to think of a short summary statement, I thought “Just Do It!” which reminded me of the Nike commercials that challenged us to “Just do it!” Sharing Jesus in practical ways with a cup of cold water, with a meal, with words of prayer, a listening ear, a ride to the doctor and in so many other ways is a call to just do it. Yet we need to always remember why we just do it. Our actions flow out of the realization what Jesus did for us. He died for us. He gives us life eternal. He empowers us with His presence. He challenges us to live out our purpose not in only the big moments of life, but more importantly in all of its little ones as well, even a cup of cold water given in his name. For we do the small thing to show the main thing of God’s love at work. We understand simple acts done with great love will change the world. We realize our service power is not based on who we are, but who Jesus is through each of us. Folks, those simple acts done in love seem so small, yet when we realize God is at work through them. We discover the great life of sharing Jesus in practical ways. Amen.

Benediction:

*May God keep you safe
May your bellies be full
May your thirst be quenched
May your hearts be blessed
With knowing you are loved
And may you share that love
With all who come your way **Amen.***