



Peter, Do You Love Me More Than These? by Jorge Cocco Santángelo.



Jesus Eating With His Disciples, James Tissot

Our Service of Worship for May 8, 2022 FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Westwood First Presbyterian Church

Cincinnati, OH



GATHERING AROUND GOD'S WORD

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude: “*Brother James’ Air*”—arr. Whitworth

[During the Prelude, you are invited to take a moment to prepare for worship.]

Ringling of the Tower Bell

Choral Introit: “*O Be Joyful*”—Yarrington

* Call to Worship (*Responsive*)

The Risen Lord be with you all.

And also with you.

Holy One, Sovereign One, gracious One

Our ever-present help

In our emptiness

You remind us of your presence

In your abundance

You remind us of your fullness

With a love that conquers death

You remind us we are yours

In our joy

You are its source

In our sorrow

You are our comfort

In the name of the Risen One

We gather to worship

Opening Prayer



* **Hymn No. 477:** “*Ye Servants of God, Your Master Proclaim*”

You servants of God, your Master proclaim,
And publish abroad his wonderful name;
The name all-victorious of Jesus extol;
His kingdom is glorious and rules over all.
“Salvation to God, who sits on the throne!”
Let all cry aloud, and honor the Son;
The praises of Jesus the angels proclaim,
Fall down on their faces and worship the Lamb.
Then let us adore, and give him his right:
All glory and power, all wisdom and might,
All honor and blessing, with angels above
And thanks never ceasing, and infinite love.



Invitation to Confession

Prayer of Confession (*Unison*)

Merciful God, forgive us. We have not loved ourselves. We have not loved our neighbors. We have not followed your ways. We have rebelled against your love. Forgive us. Trade our complacency for courage, our pettiness for possibility, our aimlessness for adventure. Unclutter our lives, Lord; we have too much, consume too much, expect too much. Grant us perspective; to see this world through others' eyes. Grant us compassion; where there is need to play our part. Grant us gratitude, for what we have, our daily bread, the gift of life. Unclutter our lives, Lord, give us simplicity, and thankful hearts. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

A Moment for Silent, Personal Confession

Assurance of Forgiveness (*Responsive*)

Open your hearts. Hear the good news: God has not abandoned us, God has not sent us out to find our own way. God is with us, all around us, at work within us. In the name of all that is, each of us is welcome into the grace, mercy, and forgiveness of the Creator of our hearts. In Jesus Christ we are forgiven!

Glory, thanks and praise to the Creator of Life!

May Christ's peace be with you this day and every day.

And also with you.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRAYER REQUESTS

† May WestFed Food Pantry needs: Cereal, Crackers, and Canned Corn

† The flowers this morning are given by:

- ♥ Mr. and Mrs. Michael Kahsar in memory of Gladys and Edward Hellman.
- ♥ Daun Lameier to honor all mothers everywhere!

† Prayers are requested for:

- ♥ Janet Ziegler, admitted to Jewish Hospital, diagnosed with leukemia.
- ♥ Jim Phillips, now at Alois Alzheimer's Center.
- ♥ Joe Dearwester, recovering from knee replacement surgery.
- ♥ The families of Jane Van Schoik, Jim Becker and Youvon Coleman, who have passed away in the last few weeks.
- ♥ Cathie DeFazio, who is dealing with a rare melanoma behind her right eye, and Larry DeFazio, who is healing from a torn right rotator cuff.
- ♥ Dominic, a teen-aged friend of the Zorn's, undergoing open heart surgery.
- ♥ Susie, a friend of the Kochheisers, undergoing chemotherapy.
- ♥ Kathy Kiefer, who has been hospitalized with kidney issues.
- ♥ Linda Kugele who continues to deal with breathing issues.
- ♥ Our homebound members and friends.
- ♥ The members of our Session and its committees.
- ♥ The discernment team.



MOMENT FOR MEDITATION: PETER, DO YOU LOVE ME?

Why does Jesus ask Peter if he loves Him three times? Because Peter denied Jesus three times. But Jesus wasn't asking because He didn't know the answer. Peter was correct in saying, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love you." Jesus was doing it to have Peter confront his sins, which had to be addressed and removed before he can be commissioned to tend to the Lord's sheep.

Why would Jesus ask Peter if he loves Him more than them? Before His crucifixion, when Jesus had said that the disciples will be scattered, Peter had declared in effect that he loved Jesus more than the other disciples did. Matthew 26:31-34 says: "*Then Jesus said to them, 'You will all become deserters because of me this night; for it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.' But after I am raised up, I will go ahead of you to Galilee.'*" Peter said to him, "*Though all become deserters because of you, I will never desert you.*" Jesus said to him, "*Truly I tell you, this very night, before the cock crows, you will deny me three times.*"

Are the second and third questions same or different? Although they read the same in English, they are actually different in the original Greek. While English has only one word for "love," there are quite a few in Greek. There is *eros* for erotic love, *phelos* for friendship, and *storge* for affection from familiarity among family members or others brought together not by their choice. And then there's *agape*, the sacrificial, unconditional love. In the passage above, Jesus uses the verb form of *agape* in the first two of his three questions and the verb form of *phelos* in the third, while Peter responds with the verb form of *phelos* all three times.

So what really is happening? Jesus initially asks Peter if he loves Him sacrificially "more than these." Instead of addressing the comparison, Peter answers by claiming his love for Jesus as a friend; after betraying Jesus, there was no way he could claim anything more than that. Jesus then drops the comparison and asks Peter if he loves Him sacrificially. Peter sticks to his claim of friendly love. With His third question, Jesus drops the level of love down to Peter's, and there's a match. Jesus will start working on us with whatever level of love we have for Him, but he does demand humility, which is what Peter displayed in John 21:15-17, in contrast to his prideful declaration in Matthew 26:31-34 above.

~ bibleversestudy.com



* **Response:** "Alleluia, Alleluia, Give Thanks to the Risen Lord" (Unison)

[Refrain]: Alleluia, alleluia, give thanks to the risen Lord.
Alleluia, alleluia, give praise to his Name.

We have been crucified with Christ, now we shall live forever. [Refrain]
Come let us praise the living God, joyfully sing to our Savior. [Refrain]

PROCLAIMING GOD'S WORD

Prayer for Illumination

Gospel Reading: John 21:1-19—Jesus Appears to Seven Disciples

¹ After these things Jesus showed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias; and he showed himself in this way. ² Gathered there together were Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples. ³ Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will go with you." They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

⁴ Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. ⁵ Jesus said to them, "Children, you have no fish, have you?" They answered him, "No." ⁶ He said to them, "Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish. ⁷ That disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on some clothes, for he was naked, and jumped into the sea. ⁸ But the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, only about a hundred yards off.

⁹ When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread. ¹⁰ Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught." ¹¹ So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, a hundred fifty-three of them; and though there were so many, the net was not torn. ¹² Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, "Who are you?" because they knew it was the Lord. ¹³ Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. ¹⁴ This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

¹⁵ When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my lambs."

¹⁶ A second time he said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Tend my sheep.” ¹⁷ He said to him the third time, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” And he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep. ¹⁸ Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go.” ¹⁹ (He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, “Follow me.”

This is the Gospel of Our Lord, Jesus Christ. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon: “*All The Way*”

RESPONDING TO GOD’S WORD

Invitation to Offering

[No offering will be collected. Please place your offerings in the baskets located at the entrances to the sanctuary. Thank you for your generosity—now and always!]

Offertory Prayer (Unison)

God of New Life, out of the abundance of our lives we offer these gifts to you. Through your blessing and our willingness to share, may these offerings become a source for hope and love in this church family, and in the community beyond us, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Offertory Anthem: “*Psalm 23*”—arr. Howard Goodall

Kristi Reed, soprano and Chancel Choir

Pastoral Prayer and The Lord’s Prayer (unison)

[During the prayer, there will be an opportunity to offer a joy or concern aloud. During the pause, feel free to call out the name of someone for whom prayer is requested, or briefly, a joy or concern on your heart. The prayer concludes with the Lord’s Prayer, offered in unison.]

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us—not into temptation—but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

BEARING GOD’S WORD INTO THE WORLD

*** Hymn No. 239:** “*How Happy Is Each Child of God*”

How happy is each child of God who walks within God’s ways!
You’ll reap good fruit from honest work, and joy in life always.

How happy is the family who honors God above!
The Lord shall send all help and grace to bless your home with love.

May God’s great peace, good health, and joy forever fill your home;
May you and your descendants know forever God’s shalom!

Charge and Benediction

Choral Response: “*God Be With You*”—Gene Grier

Postlude: “*Prelude in G Major, BWV 568*”—J.S. Bach

* Where indicated (*), those who are able are invited to stand.

AS OUR WORSHIP SERVICE ENDS, OUR MINISTRY OF SERVICE BEGINS!!

Leading Worship This Morning:

Rev. Dr. Jeff Colarossi, *Pastor*

Heather MacPhail, *Organist/Director of Music Ministries*

Jason Dennison, *Videographer/Director of Technology*

Chris Beckman, *Lay Worship Leader*

