

Lectionary Readings
for
Sixth Sunday of Easter
Year A

Scriptures Set by
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Acts 17:22-31

You might consider having a costumed character “preach” Paul’s sermon by memory; since it’s a brief passage, that should be easily accomplished.

Here is that sermon as a responsive reading. Before the reading, consider using “I Sing the Mighty Power of God”, “All Things Bright and Beautiful”, “Everything Was Made by God” – or other hymns about the God of creation; follow it with “He Lives” or another resurrection hymn.

Statement of Our Faith from Acts 17:24-31

Leader: The God who made the world and everything in it -- the Lord of heaven and earth – does not live in shrines made by human hands.

People: He does not rely on the service of human hands, as though He needed anything; He Himself gives to all mortals life, breath and everything they need.

Leader: From one ancestor (Adam) He made all nations to inhabit the earth.

People: He set the length of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they live.

Leader: He did this so they would seek after Him and find Him, even though He is never far away from each one of us.

People: In Him we live and move and have our being; as it has been said, “We are His offspring.”

Leader: Since we are His offspring, we ought not to think of Him in terms of gold, silver or stone – an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals.

People: For a long time now, God has overlooked the periods of human ignorance, but now He commands all people everywhere to repent.

Leader: He has fixed a day on which He will have the world judged in righteousness by the One whom He has appointed.

People: He has reassured us by raising this One from the dead. Thanks be to God.

Hymn/Song Suggestions:

“He Lives”

“Children of God”

“Children of the Heavenly Father”

John 14:15-21

For this reading, the words of Jesus are maintained in the leader parts; in the congregational parts, the words of Jesus have been changed to statements of faith. To set up the reading, we also backed up a couple of verses ahead of today's lectionary reading.

Responsive Reading Based from John 14:13-21

Leader: The words of Jesus: "Whatever you ask in my name, I will do it in order that through me, the Father may be glorified."

People: We love you, and we will keep your commandments.

Leader: "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Advocate to be with you forever.

This is the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees him nor knows him."

People: We know him because he abides with us and will continue to be in us.

Leader: "I will not leave you as orphans. I am coming to you. In a little while, the world will no longer see me, but you will see me."

People: Because you live, we will also live.

Leader: "On that day you will know that I am in my Father."

People: We are in you, and you are in us.

Leader: "Those who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me."

People: Those who love you will be loved by your Father; and you will love them and reveal yourself to them.

Hymn/Song Suggestions:

"I Love You, Lord."

"I Love Thee"

"Spirit, Now Live in Me"

"I Live" (CLB)

"Jesus Loves Me"

1 Peter 3

Responsive Reading from 1 Peter 3:18-22

Leader: Christ suffered for sins, one time for all people.

People: The righteous One has suffered for the unrighteous.

Leader: This was done in order to bring you to God.

People: He was put to death in the flesh, but he was made alive in the spirit.

Leader: He went in the spirit and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, who in former times did not obey.

People: In spite of their disobedience, God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark.

Leader: A few – actually only eight people - were saved through the water of the flood.

People: Baptism, which this prefigured, now saves us—not as a removal of dirt from the body.

Leader: Baptism acts as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

People: This Jesus Christ has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God.

Leader: There he reigns over angels, authorities, and powers.

People: They continue there as his subjects.

Hymn/Song Suggestions:

“Majestic Sweetness Sits Enthroned”

“Crown Him with Many Crowns”

“In the Cross of Christ I Glory”

“This Is the Threefold Truth”

Affirmation of Our Allegiance (from 1 Peter 3:13-18a) *as unison reading or solo reading*

Who can harm us if we are eager to do what is good? We are blessed, even if we suffer for doing what is right. We do not fear what others fear; we will not be intimidated. In our hearts, we will sanctify Christ as Lord. We stand ready to make our defense of the faith to anyone who questions the hope which is ours; we will do this with gentleness and reverence. We will live with a clear conscience, so that those who abuse us for our good conduct in Christ will be put to shame. It is better to suffer for doing good, if that is God’s will, than to suffer for doing evil. For Christ suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring us to God.

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Affirmation of Our Allegiance (from I Peter 3:13-18a) *as responsive reading*

Leader: Who can harm us if we are eager to do what is good?

People: We are blessed, even if we suffer for doing what is right.

Leader: We do not fear what others fear; we will not be intimidated.

People: In our hearts, we will sanctify Christ as Lord.

Leader: We stand ready to make our defense of the faith to anyone who questions the hope which is ours.

People: We will do this with gentleness and reverence.

Leader: We will live with a clear conscience, so that those who abuse us for our good conduct in Christ will be put to shame.

People: It is better to suffer for doing good, if that is God's will, than to suffer for doing evil.

Leader: For Christ suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring us to God.

Statement of Suffering (I Peter 3:14a, 17-18a)

If we suffer for doing what is right, we are blessed. It is better to suffer for doing good, if that is God's will, than to suffer for doing evil. For Christ suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring us to God.

Hymn/Song Suggestions:

“Ready”

“Wherever He Leads, I'll Go”

“O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee”

Psalm 66:8-20

Call to Worship from Psalm 66

Leader: Bless the Lord, all of you! Let the sound of His praise be heard in this place.

People: We praise You, O Lord, because you continue to give us life, and you protect us.

Leader: Like silver is tried in the fire, so you have tested us. You snared us in nets, laid burdens on our backs, allowed others to overwhelm us.

People: We have come through the fire and through the water, and you have brought us out into an open and spacious place.

Leader: I will come into your house with offerings.

People: I will be true to the promises I made to you when I was in trouble.

Leader: All of you who fear God, come and hear what He has done for me.

People: I cried out to Him and praised Him.

Leader: If I had embraced iniquity in my heart, He would not have listened.

People: But truly God has listened. He has given attention to the words of my prayers.

Leader: Blessed be God because He has not rejected my prayer.

People: Blessed be God because He has not removed His steadfast love from me.

Leader: Bless the Lord, all of you! Let the sound of His praise be heard in this place.

Follow immediately with a great hymn of praise (e.g. "O My Soul, Bless God the Father", "We Praise You, O God, Our Redeemer, Creator")

Hymn/Song Suggestions:

"O Jesus, I Have Promised"

"Blessed Be the God of Israel"

"Bless the Lord, O My Soul"

"Come, All You People" FWS (Iona Community)

"How Firm a Foundation"