

## “True Colors”



The Rev. Ryan Wiksell

June 9, 2024 | 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

*Wear Orange Sunday*

St. Michael's Episcopal Church

Independence, MO

May I speak with the Breath of God, from the Word of God, in the Name of God.

- In my newsletter on Friday, I wrote about June being a very colorful month
- Obviously we're wearing orange today. And we're also celebrating Pride month, with ALL the colors.
- But one color can mean very different things to different people, right?
- Example... give me a thumbs-up or a thumbs-down, depending on whether you see each color reference as negative or positive.
- Black Tuesday [negative]. Black Friday [positive]
  - (Doesn't mean you have to like Black Friday, but the word black refers to a business being "in the black" which is a positive for them.
- True Blue [positive]. Feeling Blue [negative]
- Going Green [positive – caring for creation]. "He's a little Green" [negative – inexperienced]
- Red Flag [negative]. Red Letter Day [positive]
- Red actually has a ton of symbolism.

- Red ink is the opposite of black ink. “in the red”.
- Of course in the Episcopal Church we love our red doors, as a sign of welcome.
- It’s also the color we use for feast days like Pentecost, and special liturgical events like ordinations.
- The blood of Christ is such a central motif in Episcopal worship, the color of blood has become central to a lot of our spiritual values.
- And in case you didn’t get enough baseball talk from me last week...
- You probably know about the Cincinnati Reds baseball team, that had to change their name to the “Redlegs” during the “Red scare” (1953-9), because just the word Red had become associated with communists, spies and traitors. “Better dead than red!”
- Speaking of politics and authorities, let’s look at those readings
  - I don’t know if this was intentional, but one thing they have in common is to call our systems into doubt

- To look closer at those institutions that we implicitly trust, and remember how easily we can forget God, and fall into a type of idolatry.
- 1 Samuel could be summed up “Be careful what you wish for”.
- The people want a king in order to “be like other nations”
- And God says yes but offers a disclaimer: It’s going to be terrible. “Don’t say I didn’t warn you.”
- Epistle
  - “We look not at what can be seen but what cannot be seen”
  - “We know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a house made by God”
  - Is the earthly tent a bad thing? No. It’s a blessing.
  - But it’s not eternal. It’s not worthy of all our trust.
- Gospel
  - Maybe we don’t trust a president or a governor, or the courts
  - But it seems good to trust one’s own family, right?
  - Your mileage may vary, of course
  - But that seems like something the Bible would be in favor of

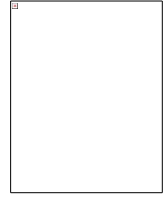
- And sure, if you have a trustworthy family, go ahead and trust them
- But Jesus' family crossed the line in today's Gospel
- They couldn't see him as the Messiah, as the Anointed One
- They could only see him as a brother, and a son. And probably a brother/son who had left them behind in order to pursue his purpose.
- Jesus showed his followers that even common blood is not more important than our mission and purpose and Children of God.
- We love them in every way possible. But we don't worship them.
- I'm sure his mother Mary, and his brothers felt rejected
- Look again at 1 Samuel. God told Samuel not to worry: "It's not you it's me. They're not rejecting you, they're rejecting me."
  - Is there something inherently wrong with a monarch? Not necessarily.

- Is there something inherently wrong with a firearm? Not necessarily. But we wear the color today to caution against the danger.
- [Gun Violence Prevention – tease Aaron’s message]
- There are physical dangers, obviously. Of violence, and of accidents.
- But this is the moment to look at the spiritual dangers outlined in our readings.
- God says to Samuel: The people put all their faith in a political leader, but he will let them down.
- Jesus says to the people: You will put all your faith in your family systems, but they will let you down.
- They are the “earthly tent” which is fragile and passing away.
- We can benefit from these things, and be blessed by them. But not when we forget the Source of all blessing.
- From today’s Psalm: “I will give thanks to you, O Lord, with my whole heart”

- “Before the gods [of politics, the gods of firearms, even the gods of family] I will sing your praise”
- “The Lord will make good his purpose for me. O Lord, *your love* endures forever”
- Amen.

The Lessons Appointed for Use on the  
**Sunday closest to June 8**

Proper 5  
Year B  
RCL



<i>Track 1</i>	<i>or</i>	<i>Track 2</i>
1 Samuel 8:4-11, (12-15), 16-20, (11:14-15) Psalm 138 2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1 Mark 3:20-35		Genesis 3:8-15 Psalm 130 2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1 Mark 3:20-35

## The Collect

O God, from whom all good proceeds: Grant that by your inspiration we may think those things that are right, and by your merciful guiding may do them; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

## Old Testament

### 1 Samuel 8:4-11, ~~(12-15)~~, 16-20, (11:14-15)

All the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah, and said to him, “You are old and your sons do not follow in your ways; appoint for us, then, a king to govern us, like other nations.” But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, “Give us a king to govern us.” Samuel prayed to the LORD, and the LORD said to Samuel, “Listen to the voice of the people in



all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them. Just as they have done to me, from the day I brought them up out of Egypt to this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so also they are doing to you. Now then, listen to their voice; only—you shall solemnly warn them, and show them the ways of the king who shall reign over them.”

So Samuel reported all the words of the LORD to the people who were asking him for a king. He said, “These will be the ways of the king who will reign over you: he will take your sons and appoint them to his chariots and to be his horsemen, and to run before his chariots; ~~and he will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties, and some to plow his ground and to reap his harvest, and to make his implements of war and the equipment of his chariots. He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers. He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive orchards and give them to his courtiers. He will take one-tenth of your grain and of your vineyards and give it to his officers and his courtiers.]~~ He will take your male and female slaves, and the best of your cattle and donkeys, and put them to his work. He will take one-tenth of your flocks, and you shall be his slaves. And in that day you will cry out because of your king, whom you have chosen for yourselves; but the LORD will not answer you in that day.”

But the people refused to listen to the voice of Samuel; they said, “No! but we are determined to have a king over us, so that we also may be like other nations, and that our king may govern us and go out before us and fight our battles.”

[Samuel said to the people, “Come, let us go to Gilgal and there renew the kingship.” So all the people went to Gilgal, and there they made Saul king before the LORD in Gilgal. There they sacrificed offerings of well-being before the LORD, and there Saul and all the Israelites rejoiced greatly.]

## The Psalm

### Psalm 138

#### *Confitebor tibi*

- 1 I will give thanks to you, O LORD, with my whole heart; \*  
before the gods I will sing your praise.
- 2 I will bow down toward your holy temple  
and praise your Name, \*  
because of your love and faithfulness;
- 3 For you have glorified your Name \*  
and your word above all things.
- 4 When I called, you answered me; \*  
you increased my strength within me.
- 5 All the kings of the earth will praise you, O LORD, \*  
when they have heard the words of your mouth.
- 6 They will sing of the ways of the LORD, \*  
that great is the glory of the LORD.
- 7 Though the LORD be high, he cares for the lowly; \*  
he perceives the haughty from afar.
- 8 Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you keep me safe; \*  
you stretch forth your hand against the fury of my enemies;  
your right hand shall save me.
- 9 The LORD will make good his purpose for me; \*  
O LORD, your love endures for ever;  
do not abandon the works of your hands.

## The Epistle

### 2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1

Just as we have the same spirit of faith that is in accordance with scripture—“I believed, and so I spoke” —we also believe, and so we speak, because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus, and will bring us with you into his presence. Yes, everything is for your sake, so that grace, as it extends to more and more people, may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.

So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.

For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

## **The Gospel**

### **Mark 3:20-35**

The crowd came together again, so that Jesus and his disciples could not even eat. When his family heard it, they went out to restrain him, for people were saying, “He has gone out of his mind.” And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, “He has Beelzebul, and by the ruler of the demons he casts out demons.” And he called them to him, and spoke to them in parables, “How can Satan cast out Satan? **If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand.** And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but his end has come. But no one can enter a strong man’s house and plunder his property without first tying up the strong man; then indeed the house can be plundered.

“Truly I tell you, people will be forgiven for their sins and whatever blasphemies they utter; but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit can never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin”— for they had said, “He has an unclean spirit.”

Then his mother and his brothers came; and standing outside, they sent to him and called him. A crowd was sitting around him; and they said to him, “Your mother and your brothers and sisters are outside, asking for you.” And he replied, “Who are my mother and my brothers?” And looking at those who sat around him, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother.”