

Daily Chapel: September 3, 2020

Transcript

PRELUDE

WELCOME – Pastor Justin Lind-Ayres

May the joy of God be made complete in you, in us all together.

Good morning, I'm Pastor Justin Lind-Ayres, and I'm pleased to welcome to the first Chapel service of the academic year, our worship gathering rooted in Lutheran-Christian tradition. We are blessed to be joined in-person and on-line together in this season of our life together.

In this time of COVID-19 precautions, we will gather for socially distanced in-person worship only on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 11:30 am. So, next in-person chapel is on Tuesday at 11:30 when we will hear a good word from President Pribbenow. Fridays at 10:40 am all are welcome to come to this space for Prayer and Pastoral Presence as we mark 8 minutes and 46 seconds of silence in solidarity regarding the murder of George Floyd this summer in our town. Among these gatherings throughout the week, we will also produce videos and podcasts throughout the semester providing Sabbath rest, mindfulness, morning prayer, and interfaith/multi-religious reflections as we seek to be open to the expansive spiritual needs of our Augsburg community.

As we gather now, there will no communal singing though songs will be heard and lifted-up. We will keep our masks on (aside for worship leaders), and we will find comfort in our shared presence here and across space with technology. Thank you for being present.

Today, we give thanks for University Pastor Babette Chatman preaching on our Fall Theme, "With Boldness." And, in particular on this day, "In boldness, we pray..." And our thanks to Tom Witt, leading us in music and song.

With that, we gather bound together by the Holy Trinity, the Creator, the Christ, and the Spirit of Comfort. Amen.

SUNG PREPARATION

Bind us together, O bind us together with cords that cannot be broken.
Bind us together, O bind us together, O bind us together in love.

SCRIPTURE READING – John 17:20-23

"I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. "Righteous Father, the world does not know you, but I know you; and these

know that you have sent me. I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.”

HOMILY – Pr. Babette Chatman

Boseman was diagnosed with stage three colon cancer in 2016, and it progressed to stage four, the post said. He was 43 years old, according to The Associated Press.

Chadwick Boseman will never know how much he was loved. Battling colon cancer, shooting films in between bouts of chemo and surgery. What amazing strength. He once said: “The struggles along the way are only meant to shape you for your purpose.” Rest on King. Long live T’challa!

The post said the actor, who also played Black icons such as James Brown, Thurgood Marshall and Jackie Robinson, died at home with his wife and family.

He faced this disease journey it appears only with family. I wonder what carried him through?

If you knew that you didn’t have much longer to live – what would you do? Would you talk about how much you love your family? Would you focus on making sure that your financial affairs were in order? Would you visit people that you haven’t seen in a long time? Would you return to wherever you consider home in order to be close to where you want to be buried? Would you call your family around you in order to see them together one more time? I would suspect that much of who we are would come through when we are near life’s end. The things that we value and hope for and love would become clearer.

Today – in our Gospel lesson – we heard Jesus praying just before He was arrested. Jesus knew that He was going to die very soon. And so we find Him praying for his disciples – and not only for them, but also for us.

Jesus said: “My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message.” (John 17.20) That they may **all be one**; even as you, Father, are in me, and I in you that they also may be one us; that the world may believe that you sent me. (v21)

In this prayer, Jesus shows us what matters most. Jesus asked God to protect the disciples from the power of the evil one. The evil one is interested in dividing US.

What mattered to Jesus. Unity the oneness of his followers. Jesus knew that the disciples would experience great trauma at His death.

- Friends – we can be sure that Jesus’ prayer was answered by God with a huge, divine yes.

However, it is also clear that Jesus’ prayer for the “Unity of believers has not yet been fully answered.

On May 28 I watched in horror as George Floyd’s life was snuffed out like a candle. I heard him plead for his life, I heard him call out for his momma, I heard him say “y’all gonna kill me” If you knew you were about to die?

Brianna Taylor, Elijah McClain, Hardell Sherrell, Jamar Clarke, Dijon Kizzee, Daniel Prude, Damian Daniels, Jacob Blake ...

Christians blaming black people for their encounters with law enforcement

American Christianity and Christian values rooted in Whiteness does not facilitate Unity/Oneness

Systemic Racism, police brutality and abuse of power against black and brown skin...

A flawed criminal and justice system do not create Unity

We are being divided by Faith, Fear and Prejudice “The POTUS alone can protect white Americans from dangerous Black neighbors”

(Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton Aug 4: “Respect the disease. Provide for the spiritual and physical needs of the neighbor. Make use of medical aid. Care for one another, especially the most vulnerable.”)

We desperately need to hear Jesus’ prayer again and again...

- Today “With Boldness” We pray with Jesus that we might be one and united that “Black Lives Matter” even if they are flawed, as we all are.

“To Be Young, Gifted, and Black in a PWI - will there be unity?”

That glory is best experienced among those who can examine their own faults and recognize their need for God... We aren’t perfect. We’re family.

That we Might Be ONE!

If God has answered Jesus’ prayer that we might be one. Then does that mean that “We” as one are the answer to God’s Prayer.

I Love Augsburg, I have loved many things about Augsburg, but does Augsburg love me back? Does Augsburg love it’s BIPOC community Back.

As we live into the unity of One Augsburg move up the list of top Transforming Universities, my hope and with boldness we Pray that We might Be the University that transforms our communities to say no to division by Faith, division by Politics, Division by Race, Socio-economics...

With Boldness we Pray that we are God’s answer to Jesus’s prayer that we may be one united in agreement with One voice that all lives matter When Black Lives matter.

Unity is working together.

Jesus Prayer that we might be one - only happens when One includes “Black Lives” We

Unity is working together boldly, lovingly to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ.

It is through such unity that the people around us will believe who Jesus Christ is—the way, the truth and the life.

God’s being is revealed to us in the person of Jesus Christ, the radiant center of whom is divine love: grace, mercy, kindness, forgiveness...

A Christian Community, an infinite loving relationship - compassion, empathy, acceptance, forgiveness, one, a relationship that will prompt the world a recognition of Jesus' divine origin and of God's love for humanity.

CONCLUSION

- As one of your University Pastors I am engaged in some of the most meaningful, rewarding, and joy giving work of my life and I have am eternally grateful. There are some amazingly gifted, fiercely welcoming inclusive young people here.
- This Week (Augsburg is listed at nom 33 Most Transformative Colleges 2020 [money.com](https://www.money.com) "What's impressive is when students beat the odds by doing better than would be expected from their academic and economic backgrounds. We call this a college's value add.)
- And But, I am also an African American Black Woman in a predominately White Institutions that professes to be committed to the work of diversity and inclusion where I prayer the theology of Racial Reconciliation is not only valued but also mandated because it is Jesus' last prayer for Believers!

I am committed to do the Anti-Racism Kingdom Building Unifying work and with Boldness we touch and agree with Jesus prayer that we may all Be One and He and Parent God are one! To the Glory of God

Unity isn't what it's cracked up to be—it is far better when we fully embrace the divine love of God, and become One in unity of purpose.

When people see the unity that our faith inspires and the Holy Spirit empowers, lives are changed—and the world is transformed one life at a time. In boldness we pray may it be so!

Amen

SONG – "God in Our Praying"

God, in our praying, do we hear you calling?
Are you the source of our desire?
Move us with courage, live in our longing
and fill us with your Spirit's power.

God in our praying, do we join your singing?
Are you the pulse of all we do?
Tune us to justice, lead us in loving,
keep us in harmony with you.

PRAYER OF SENDING - Pastor Justin Lind-Ayres

As is our tradition at Augsburg, we seek to mark transitions as people take their leave from our Auggie community. This is the last week for Allyson Green, staff member in the Sabo Center and Augsburg's Chief Sustainability Officer. Over these past years, Allyson has guided us at

Augsburg to live out our call to care for the world around us and, as she has said, “the people, plants, and animals who live, work, play, grow, and depend on each other here.” She has kept Augsburg’s climate commitment front and center while supporting the Campus Kitchen program and managing the Community Garden.

In the hymn Tom sang for us, the ask of God was to “tune us to justice, lead us in loving, keep us in harmony with the Divine.” I think Allyson, through her faith and vocation, has been living out this holy work helping to tune us in justice and to lead us at Augsburg seeking harmony with God’s creation. Thank you, Allyson, for your witness among us! We send you forth to pursue yet more graduate studies, this time at Luther Seminary, and to other vocational ventures!

Normally, we would surround Allyson and lay hands on her in blessing. But today, I invite you to lift your hands wherever you are and join me in this prayer:

God of all creation.....Amen.

BENEDICTION

May God, who hears all our bold prayers, guard your going out and your coming in from this forth and for evermore. Amen.

Worship Leaders

Preacher: Rev. Babette Chatman

Presider: Rev. Justin Lind-Ayres

Musician: Tom Witt

Music Credits:

- Bind Us together, Bob Gillman, © 1977 Thankyou Music (Admin. by Capitol CMG Publishing) CCLI License #11525157
- God In Our Praying, Words, Adam Tice ©2009, GIA Publications, Inc. Music: St. Elizabeth, *Schlesische Volkslieder* 1842, One License # A-723242