

# St John's Episcopal Church

Ross, CA



Welcome Sunday  
Agape Meal  
Ordinary Time, Proper 19  
September 13, 2020 10AM

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Come hydrate your soul at St John's:

A community of connections across generations.  
Connect to God through worship, service,  
real life and tradition.

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During this season of pandemic, we have not been able to gather to share the Holy Eucharist, Christ's sacrificial love made present and real in the bread and wine.

We invite you today to share an "Agape Meal," which is not the Holy Eucharist that we long for so much, but an alternative way to recall and share Jesus' life and and love. Again and again during his ministry, Jesus gathered an unlikely crowd around the table: prostitutes, tax collectors, the poor and sick, his friends, and those who would betray him. These meals were a foreshadowing of God's kingdom, where each person is nourished, loved, and included.

Today, we remember Jesus' ministry as we gather around his table spiritually. We call this an "agape" meal, as "agape" is the Greek word for the kind of love that God has for us - love that is unconditional and always seeks the growth and joy of the beloved.

To share in this meal, you are invited to prepare two things before the service:

- something to eat: bread, crackers, cheese, fruit
- something to drink: water, lemonade, wine

Whatever you prepare should be simple and easy, but also something you love, food and drink that bring you comfort.

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As we worship today, you are invited to pray aloud with us, or join silently; to sing along or enjoy listening. Welcome - we are thankful for your presence!

Have a prayer request that you'd like to be shared (anonymously or with your name) on Sunday during the prayers? Would you like a blessing for a birthday, anniversary, or other occasion of thanksgiving? **During the service, please text your prayer request to (415) 275-0115 and it will be shared at the Prayers of the People.**

Please join in praying for the needs and concerns of our congregation by viewing our online [Prayer List and Prayer Wall](#).

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**Altar Flowers this morning are given to the Glory of God by:**

**Nancy and Carter Strauch in thanksgiving for our wedding anniversary**

To remember or celebrate a loved one with a donation for our altar flowers, please contact Nancy Strauch via [email](#) or at 510-237-5021.

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**Prelude**

*Ecce, Deus*  
*Owen*

Leonhard Schroeter (1532-1601)  
John L. Hooker (b.1944)

**Welcome**

*After the welcome announcement a bell will sound, signaling a few moments of prayer and silence.*

# Liturgy of the Word

## Processional Hymn

Guide me, O thou great Jehovah

Hymnal 690 (*Cum Rhondda*)



1 Guide me, O thou great Je - ho - vah, pil - grim through this  
2 O - pen now the crys - tal foun - tain, whence the heal - ing  
3 When I tread the verge of Jor - dan, bid my anx - ious



bar - ren land; I am weak, but thou art might - y;  
stream doth flow; let the fire and cloud - y pil - lar  
fears sub - side; death of death, and hell's de - struc - tion,



hold me with thy power - ful hand; bread of hea - ven,  
lead me all my jour - ney through; strong de - liv - erer,  
land me safe on Ca - naan's side; songs of prais - es,



bread of hea - ven, feed me now and ev - er -  
strong de - liv - erer, be thou still my strength and  
songs of prais - es, I will ev - er give to



more, feed me now and ev - er - more.  
shield, be thou still my strength and shield.  
thee, I will ev - er give to thee.

All standing, the Presider says

Blessed be the one, holy, and living God.

People

Glory to God for ever and ever.

Presider and People

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

### Opening Anthem

Voices Found 107, v.1 (*The Ash Grove*)

Text: Katherine Davis (1892-1980)



1 Let all things now liv - ing a song of thanks - giv - ing to  
God the cre - a - tor tri - um - phant - ly raise, who fash - ioned and  
made us, pro - tect - ed and stayed us, who still guides us  
on to the end of our days.

### Collect of the Day

Presider God be with you.

People And also with you.

Presider Let us pray.

O God, because without you we are not able to please you, mercifully grant that your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

**First Reading****Romans 14:1-12***Please be seated for the reading.*

Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God.

We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. For it is written,

"As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,  
and every tongue shall give praise to God."

So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

<i>Reader</i>	Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.
<i>People</i>	Thanks be to God.

**Psalm 103:8-13**

*Please join in praying the Psalm together.*

8 The Lord is full of compassion and mercy, \*  
slow to anger and of great kindness.

9 The Holy One will not always accuse us, \*  
nor will God keep anger for ever.

10 God has not dealt with us according to our sins, \*  
nor rewarded us according to our wickedness.

11 For as the heavens are high above the earth, \*  
so is God's mercy great upon those who fear the Lord.

12 As far as the east is from the west, \*  
so far has God removed our sins from us.

13 As a parent cares for their children, \*  
so does the Lord care for those who fear God.

## Gospel Acclamation

Voices Found 109 (*Earth and All Stars*)

Text: Patricia Clark, 2003

*Please stand and sing the Gospel acclamation.*



1 Peo - ple of God, ga - ther to - ge - ther, come, let us  
2 Hear-ing God's word, heed-ing the mes - sage, come and re -



sing on this glo - rious day. Shout-ing a - broad  
joice as we an - swer the call. With one ac - cord,



praise to the Mak - er, come and with bo - dy and soul let us pray.  
made in God's im - age, come in com - mu - ni - ty, wel - com - ing all.

*Refrain*



Come, let us join in the hea - ven - ly dance,



prais - ing in joy - ous ce - le - bra - tion.

**The Holy Gospel****Matthew 18:15-20**

*Priest*        The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

*People*        Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Peter came and said to Jesus, “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

“For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, ‘Pay what you owe.’ Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

*Priest*        The Gospel of the Lord.

*People*        Praise to you, Lord Christ.

**Sermon**

The Rev. Chris Rankin-Williams

*One minute of silence follows the sermon.*

## **The Nicene Creed**

*Please stand if you wish and join in saying the creed.*

We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father.  
Through him all things were made.  
For us and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven:  
by the power of the Holy Spirit  
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,  
and was made man.  
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.  
On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the Scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.  
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.  
He has spoken through the Prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

## **Prayers of the People**

Adapted from *Planning for Rites and Rituals*

As the Church, the Body of Christ in this time and place, let us offer our prayers, responding, “God, hear our prayer.”

In thanksgiving for the opportunity to gather as the Body of Christ in new ways, even as we yearn for the day that we will be together again in person; let us pray.

*God, hear our prayer.*

That all who engage with St. John’s might experience authentic welcome and care, and through the care of our community, come to increasing knowledge of the care of our God, who welcomes all; let us pray.

*God, hear our prayer.*

In thanksgiving for the arms of forgiveness that embrace us in the midst of our sin, leading us to repentance and filling us with the waters of mercy through which we will forgive others; let us pray.

*God, hear our prayer.*

For honesty in government and integrity in all our dealings with one another, that trust may be restored between people and throughout the institutions of our society; let us pray.

*God, hear our prayer.*

That we may commit ourselves to lives of simplicity, so that we may provide for the needs of the poor and hungry, as Jesus provided nourishment and hope to his followers; let us pray.

*God, hear our prayer.*

That we may share our spiritual doubts with one another, trusting that in our vulnerability we will be strengthened in faith and grow in the conviction that God’s love can transform all life; let us pray.

*God, hear our prayer.*

*Priest*

In thanksgiving for the blessings we have received, let us continue our prayers. We pray for those in our community who are in need of your care and healing, especially...And for all who have died, including...

*God, hear our prayer.*

We give you thanks and praise, O God, for the work of the Holy Spirit within and among us, work that began long ago and continues today. Grant that we may always be open to your transformation. *Amen.*

## **Peace**

*The Ministers and the People greet one another in the name of the Lord.*

## **Announcements**

## Agape Meal

### Offertory Anthem

*During this time of uncertainty, St. John's particularly needs your help to continue to offer care and support to our community. You can give online [here](#).*

*During the anthem, you are invited to place your food and drink on a table in front of you.*

Dona nobis pacem ("Grant us peace") A virtual musical offering  
Members of the St. John's Ross Choir

*Presider*            The Lord be with you.  
*People*              And also with you.  
*Presider*            Lift up your hearts.  
*People*              We lift them to the Lord.  
*Presider*            Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
*People*              It is right to give our thanks and praise.

*Presider*            Jesus, we give you thanks that during your ministry on earth you invited all people to join you at your table, taking care that none were excluded. We give you thanks that you welcomed all: prostitutes, tax collectors, the poor and sick, your friends, and those who would betray you. You spoke of the Kingdom of God as a great feast to which all are invited. And so today we seek to join you at your table. We desire to hear your voice, to share your love, and to be joined in deep communion with those from whom we differ.

We pray that as we share this food and drink, you would unite us spiritually with you and one another though we are physically apart. We pray that in this meal, you would feed our bodies and our spirits with your presence, so that we might bring your presence and comfort to others. Bless this food, and break open our hearts; bless this drink and pour out your love.

*You are invited to hold up your food.*

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the universe. You bring forth bread from the earth; and you have fed us on our way with the bread of life in the Body of your Son Jesus Christ. Let us be fed again soon with that bread of life. And as grain scattered upon the earth is gathered into one loaf, so gather our separated community together that we may be the Body of Christ, given for the world you have made. To you be glory and power for ever and ever. Amen.

*You are invited to hold up your drink.*

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the universe. You refresh us with the cup of salvation in the Blood of your Son Jesus Christ. May the time come quickly when we can share that cup again, even as you are with us now in our very thirst for you. We thank you for your continued presence in our lives. Glory to you for ever and ever. Amen.

## **Lord's Prayer**

*Please join hands with those worshipping next to you as we pray the 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,  
for ever and ever. Amen.

## **Sharing of the Agape Meal**

*Presider*

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the universe. You have blessed the earth to bring forth food to satisfy our hunger. Let this food strengthen us in the Eucharistic fast that is before us, that following our Savior in the way of the cross, we may come to the joy of his resurrection. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, now and for ever. Amen.

*All partake of the food and drink.*

## **Prayer of Thanksgiving**

*Please stand or kneel.*

Let us pray.

*Presider* We have gathered this day, both mourning and rejoicing. .  
*People* We have gathered this day in faith that Jesus is with us.  
*Presider* Surrounded by illness, we mourn with those who suffer.  
*People* Yet still we say, Alleluia!  
*Presider* We know loneliness and discomfort;  
*People* Yet still we say, Alleluia!  
*Presider* We know loneliness and discomfort;  
*People* Yet still we say, Alleluia!  
*Presider* In the midst of this pandemic  
*People* We trust your presence and love.  
Alleluia! AMEN.

## **Blessing**

*The presider asks God's blessing on the congregation*

## **Birthdays, Anniversaries and Occasions of Thanksgiving**

*All those celebrating birthdays, anniversaries and occasions of thanksgiving are invited to share them using the phone number at the beginning of the bulletin.*

Today, tomorrow and always we rejoice in the hands of God.

May God's powerful hands support you.

May God's guiding hands lead you.

May God's loving hands enfold you.

We rejoice in the hands of God. *Amen.*

## Closing Hymn

Come, thou fount of every blessing

Hymnal 686 (*Nettleton*)

1 Come, thou fount of ev - ery bless - ing, tune my  
2 Here I find my great - est trea - sure; lith - er,  
3 Oh, to grace how great a debt - or dai - ly

heart to sing thy grace! Streams of mer - cy nev - er  
by thy help, I've come; and I hope, by thy good  
I'm con - strained to be! Let thy good - ness, like a

ceas - ing, call for songs of loud - est praise.  
plea - sure, safe - ly to ar - rise at home.  
fet - ter, bind my wan - dering heart to thee;

Teach me some me - lo - dious son - net, sung by  
Je - sus sought me when a stran - ger wan - dering  
prone to wan - der, Lord, I feel it, prone to

flam - ing tongues a - bove. Praise the mount! Oh, fix me  
from the fold of God; he, to res - cue me from  
leave the God I love; here's my heart, oh, take and

on it, mount of God's un - chang - ing love.  
dan - ger, in - ter - posed his pre - cious blood.  
seal it, seal it for thy courts a - bove.

## Dismissal

Our worship has ended and now our service begins.  
Let us go forth into the world,  
rejoicing in the power of the Spirit!

*People*

Thanks be to God! Alleluia! Alleluia!

## Postlude

Improvisation on *Nettleton*

*During this time of uncertainty, St. John's particularly needs your help to continue to offer care and support to our community. You can give online [here](#).*

**Today** after the 10am service, please join us [here](#) for coffee hour on zoom. Meeting ID: 857 1624 1563. If you would like help in connecting through zoom, please reach out by [email](#).

### **Screen Free Sunday September 20**

Zoom fatigue and screen burnout are real and concerning. More and more parishioners say they are reaching their limit on how much they and their families can in front of screens. We all need some sabbath time from online interactions and screen based media. On September 20 we celebrate Screen Free Sunday and invite you to take a break from screens the entire day. There will be no online services from the church on September 20. Resources on how to celebrate church on your own or with friends and family are available [here](#).

# St John's Episcopal Church

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Bishop of California:	The Rt. Rev. Marc Handley Andrus
Rector:	The Rev. Chris Rankin-Williams <i>crw@stjohnsross.org</i>
Associate Priest:	The Rev. Ginger Strickland <i>ginger@stjohnsross.org</i>
Assisting:	The Revs. Skip Fotch, Jan Hickman West, and Bill Rankin
Director of Music:	Dr. David Montgomery
Choir section leader:	Betsy Bennett-Smith <i>david@stjohnsross.org</i>
Church Administrator:	Virginia Kosydar <i>virginia@stjohnsross.org</i>
Youth Minister:	Tom Fregoso <i>tom@stjohnsross.org</i>
Director of Children's Ministry:	Sandra Pathik <i>sandra@stjohnsross.org</i>
Treasurer:	Susan Aley
Director of Stewardship	Emily McFarland <i>emily@stjohnsross.org</i>
Bookkeeper:	Henry Auriti <i>bookkeeper@stjohnsross.org</i>
Vestry:	<i>President:</i> The Rev. Chris Rankin-Williams <i>Senior Warden:</i> Robb Baer <i>Junior Warden:</i> June Sullivan Mary Beth Baker, Genny Biggs, Joannie Ericson, Maya Farhoud, Jennifer Jones, Paul Kaplan, Mike O'Brien, Chris Russell, Jaco Sadie, Kathryn Supinski, Amy Taylor.