Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of our hearts of all the Spirit has gathered here today be acceptable to you. Amen.

He is risen!...We are finally at the end of the Easter season. Today’s story is all about prayer. We are fortunate to hear Jesus pray and we hear how he prays on behalf of his disciples and people of all times and places, which includes us. As we listen in we are given a glimpse of Jesus’ mission for the world—that all may be drawn into the life of the triune God. God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit. Jesus entrusts this community of disciples—but also our communities, our lives, and our world—into the care of God. When we pray for someone, like we do on the prayer chain or each Sunday in the prayers of the church this means their life is cared for and has value to those praying on their behalf. It also shows the prayer believes in and trusts in God and that God cares for us. This is a cornerstone of our faith as it is a time to have a relationship with God – the God who fulfilled his promise when we hear during Easter loved the world as he gave his only Son to die for us so we will be found righteous when we stand before God. This is the Christ that ascended to God which is also written about during the Easter season. Many things in our life are out of our control but we entrust those we care for and our future to the care of the Triune God. Some people have said they are not sure how to pray. We can talk to God in prayer the same way we talk to a friend – a loving, caring friend.

This Sunday is the Feast of Weeks which ends with the Festival of Pentecost which commemorates the descent of the [Holy Spirit](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holy_Spirit_in_Christianity) upon the Apostles which we celebrate next Sunday. This was done when they would all be together in Jerusalem while they were celebrating the [Feast of Weeks](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feast_of_Weeks), one of the 3 Hebrew solemn feasts which culminates at Pentecost. In Hebrew this is known as Shavuot (Sha-voo-ott), one of the major Jewish festivals outlined in the Old Testament that commemorates the giving of the Torah to Moses at Mount Sinai 50 days after Passover. This timing gives the festival its Greek name, Pentecost, meaning "fiftieth day." This Feast of Weeks is primarily a harvest festival, marking the end of the grain harvest in Israel, and it holds significant religious and historical importance. Passover, the Feast of Weeks, and the Feast of Tabernacles—all requires that all able-bodied Jewish males travel to Jerusalem to attend the feast and offer sacrifices. That’s why all the Apostles are all there. This Feast of Weeks was in celebration of the first fruits of the wheat harvest, and the Feast of Tabernacles involved offerings of the first fruits of the olive and grape harvests.

Today we hear the last of Jesus words before his death, which may be a little confusing since we already celebrated Easter Day and the ascension where Jesus ascended to heaven and yet we are hearing Christ’s pre-Easter final words just before his Passion. I believe these lessons have been selected as a reminder of what Jesus wanted us followers to do per our call in baptism, once we know his prediction has been fulfilled, that he would rise 3 days after his death and now we have a roadmap in following him and our relationship with the Triune God. An essential aspect of relationships is thinking, hoping, dreaming, wishing, praying for and about the future. We heard Jesus’ commandment to love one another as he loved us. This is Agape love, unlike Phileo love which is romantic love, or love for friends or family but a love love is not emotional but rather is based on action like when God gave his only begotten Son so whosoever believed in him would have eternal life. Then Jesus commands us to love one another as he has first loved us for the glory of God then Jesus prays a chapter long prayer for us to be united so the world might believe that God sent Jesus. When we are called by God’s Spirit to worship today, we are united as one in love, and as Easter people we hear the Word of God, we see and taste Jesus and then are sent in the world in love, to do for others the way Jesus did for us by the words of the Father. Feeding the hungry is in response to what Jesus has asked us to do. Agape love is not an emotion but is an action. Agape love we bring into action when we feed the hungry. This is also true when we help others to help the homeless survive and find housing. This is also true when half the money we contribute to the synod helps with world hunger and disaster relief and many other causes worldwide.e folks to help the homelesthe

Jesus prays for unity among his followers: The first century the Christian community was dealing with divisions at the end of the century that existed among them. Indeed, we still have differences and we pursue ecumenical endeavors as we strive to be united as one. Today’s story includes all of the Evangelist John’s key points: Father, name, word, belief, glory, love, and world. This “World” is *kosmos*, which is both the place and the time in which God’s will is enacted. The unity sought for believers is modeled on John’s Christology: the Son is one with the Father. By belief in Christ we are open to God’s unlimited grace so we will be unified and be held righteous. We love one another as Jesus had loved us. Jesus tells us in his prayer  he has made God’s name known to us so that the love with which God has for Jesus may be in us, and I in them. Go and serve in love to the glory of God. . Amen.

ttt