

NEIGHBORS IN SOLIDARITY

SUNDAY, JUNE 2



ONE IN CHRIST

SUGGESTED THEME(S): “One Love,” “Solidly One,” “One in Christ,” “That we may all be One.”

SUGGESTED PRAYER PETITION: Bless us and other communities of faith across South Dakota, as we are united through the love of Christ. Open our eyes and our hearts, so that we may know our neighbors, and that we may share in their joys and struggles.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

JOHN 17:20-26

[Jesus prayed:] 20“I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, 21that 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. 22The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, 23I 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. 24Father, 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.

25“Righteous Father, the world does not know you, but I know you; and these know that you have sent me. 26I 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.”

SERMON STARTERS:

Today Jesus prays and, in his prayer, demonstrates an unfolding theme in John’s Gospel and throughout Johannine literature – the oneness of the father and the son, and the oneness that the father and son bring about in and among us through love. A dear friend of mine wept when his son was baptized. I asked what happened. He said, “I realized at that moment that the same love that I have for my son – that is the love of God for us. It wasn’t my love I was feeling; it was all of ours.” Wow! This would be a great day to explore our essential oneness with each other through Christ. Perhaps the people and cultures of our Neighbor in Solidarity ministries look and sound quite different from the people in your congregation, and therein we are invited to expand our view of ourselves and what it means to share the love of Christ with ALL of our Neighbors. Oneness also means that our transformation is bound up with each other’s destiny – when one hurts, we all hurt, and when one celebrates, we all have a party! Today you could also pray with the word “Solidarity:” Solid, inseparable, etc.

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NEIGHBORS IN SOLIDARITY

SUNDAY, JUNE 9



NOW WE SEE IT

SUGGESTED THEME(S): “Amazed and Bewildered,” “Now we See it!” “The Work of God - in our Neighbors”

SUGGESTED PRAYER PETITION: Come, Holy Spirit. Bring us together with our Neighbors in Solidarity, our supported ministries across South Dakota. Although languages and distance may divide us, help us to trust that your same Spirit blows through us all, giving us all the power to perform miraculous works in your name.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

[PENTECOST] ACTS 2:1-21

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. 2 Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. 4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues[a] as the Spirit enabled them.

5 Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. 6 When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. 7 Utterly amazed, they asked: “Aren’t all these who are speaking Galileans? 8 Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? 9 Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,[b] 10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome 11 [both Jews and converts to Judaism]; Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!” 12 Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, “What does this mean?”

13 Some, however, made fun of them and said, “They have had too much wine.”

14 Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: “Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. 15 These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It’s only nine in the morning! 16 No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

17 “In the last days, God says,

I will pour out my Spirit on all people.

Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
your young men will see visions,
your old men will dream dreams.

18 Even on my servants, both men and women,

I will pour out my Spirit in those days,
and they will prophesy.

19 I will show wonders in the heavens above
and signs on the earth below,
blood and fire and billows of smoke.

20 The sun will be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood
before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.

21 And everyone who calls
on the name of the Lord will be saved.’[c]

SERMON STARTERS:

This has always been a day to name and celebrate the diversity of God’s people. Today, you have a resource available to you, a video of people reading the text in 4 of the languages spoken in our Neighbors in Solidarity congregations every Sunday.

OR - alternative text on next page.

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NEIGHBORS IN SOLIDARITY

SUNDAY, JUNE 9



NOW WE SEE IT

June 9, Continued...

JOHN 14:8-17 [25-27]

8Philip said to [Jesus,] “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.” 9Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? 10Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. 11Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. 12Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. 13I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.

15“If you love me, you will keep my commandments. 16And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. 17This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you. [

25“I have said these things to you while I am still with you. 26But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. 27Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.”]

SERMON STARTERS:

If you choose to go with the Gospel text for the day, it might be an occasion to acknowledge that there is amazing work being done in these ministries of our synod that you may not have been aware of. “Have I been with you all this time... and you still do not know me?” Jesus is powerfully present in communities of faith in ways that may not often enter our imagination, and the NiS ministries bear witness to the breadth of God’s work among us. God is at work in ways that you may not see. The theme of “greater works,” may provide an occasion to lift up one of the stories of what God is up to through these your neighbors and partners in the Gospel.

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NEIGHBORS IN SOLIDARITY

SUNDAY, JUNE 16  DECLARATION

THEME IDEAS: “Declaring the Amazing Acts of God!” “My Story, Our Story, God’s Story”

SUGGESTED PRAYER PETITION:

For opportunities to declare your works in the ministries across South Dakota; for our Neighbors in Solidarity who perform incredible ministry; for people in the world eager to hear of your presence and your work, let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

Your mercy is great.

JOHN 16:12-15

[Jesus said,] 12 “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. 14 He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. 15 All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.”

SERMON STARTERS:

Today we can acknowledge that these ministries belong to God, as all of our ministries do. We bear witness, make known, declare the mighty acts of God to one another when we share the stories of what God is up to in our communities. That’s what NiS Sundays can be about. The invitation for Neighbors in Solidarity ministries is that people Pray, Learn and Act. One ACTION today might be to invite people to share what intrigues, excites or inspires them as they learn about these ministries. Consider using two or more videos today as conversation starters using these always helpful prompts:

- o As you hear about these ministries through these videos and other resources:
 - § What is God doing?
 - § What are God’s people doing?
 - § What does this mean for us?

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NEIGHBORS IN SOLIDARITY

SUNDAY, JUNE 23



A HOLY DISCOMFORT

THEME IDEAS: “A Holy Discomfort,” “Meeting God in the Strangest Places”

SUGGESTED PRAYER PETITION: For our Neighbors in Solidarity, the supported ministries across South Dakota; for your calming presence in the midst of our fear; for the courage to see your work in the lives of people different from us, let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

Your mercy is great.

LUKE 8:26-39

26Then [Jesus and his disciples] arrived at the country of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee. 27As he stepped out on land, a man of the city who had demons met him. For a long time he had worn no clothes, and he did not live in a house but in the tombs. 28When he saw Jesus, he fell down before him and shouted at the top of his voice, “What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me”—29for Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. [For many times it had seized him; he was kept under guard and bound with chains and shackles, but he would break the bonds and be driven by the demon into the wilds.] 30Jesus then asked him, “What is your name?” He said, “Legion”; for many demons had entered him. 31They begged him not to order them to go back into the abyss.

32Now there on the hillside a large herd of swine was feeding; and the demons begged Jesus to let them enter these. So he gave them permission. 33Then the demons came out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned.

34When the swineherds saw what had happened, they ran off and told it in the city and in the country. 35Then people came out to see what had happened, and when they came to Jesus, they found the man from whom the demons had gone sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid. 36Those who had seen it told them how the one who had been possessed by demons had been healed. 37Then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gerasenes asked Jesus to leave them; for they were seized with great fear. So he got into the boat and returned. 38The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with him; but Jesus sent him away, saying, 39“Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you.” So he went away, proclaiming throughout the city how much Jesus had done for him.

SERMON STARTERS:

Lots of possible directions emerge from this rich story...

- We should never be surprised at the places where Jesus is willing to go and where God is at work.
- These ministries sound different, worship differently – perceived difference can make us uncomfortable. When we act on our discomfort, rather than move past it, we, like the Gerasenes, are essentially asking Jesus to leave!
- Consider using one of several anti-racism resources today available here:
- “The man met him” – how do we respond to people we perceive as “other” or “stranger”
- In connection with the parable of the sower earlier in this chapter – Jesus is planting a little seed by leaving the healed man in his community to tell the story of how Jesus set him free. Sometimes that seed is YOU! What kind of “planting” is Jesus calling you to do in your community?
- The man wants to go with Jesus, but Jesus wants to send him back to his community so that they can experience the healing of accepting this brother. In order to become truly human, we need to learn to live with and love all of God’s people.

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NEIGHBORS IN SOLIDARITY

SUNDAY, JUNE 30



STARTING TODAY

THEME IDEAS: “Starting today...” “It’s About Love, Love, Love,” “Don’t look Back”

SUGGESTED PRAYER PETITION: For strength to act now to support our Neighbors in Solidarity; for ministries that need urgent support; for courage to offer ourselves in service to your Kingdom, let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

Your mercy is great.

LUKE 9:51-62

51When the days drew near for [Jesus] to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem. 52And he sent messengers ahead of him. On their way they entered a village of the Samaritans to make ready for him; 53but they did not receive him, because his face was set toward Jerusalem. 54When his disciples James and John saw it, they said, “Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?” 55But he turned and rebuked them. 56Then they went on to another village.

57As they were going along the road, someone said to him, “I will follow you wherever you go.” 58And Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.” 59To another he said, “Follow me.” But he said, “Lord, first let me go and bury my father.” 60But Jesus said to him, “Let the dead bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God.” 61Another said, “I will follow you, Lord; but let me first say farewell to those at my home.” 62Jesus said to him, “No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.”

SERMON STARTERS:

These texts create a sense of urgency – the time to act is now! – the time to reach out and form relationships is now!

How does fully engaging our Neighbors in Solidarity invite us into a fuller appreciation and experience of the Kingdom of God?

This is the Sunday for a call to action:

- Invite everyone to sign up for Neighbors in Solidarity [see the NiS page on the Synod Website for downloadable forms].
- Become a Congregation in Solidarity [Same thing as a NiS, but for your congregation to become a partner with these ministries, too].
- Connect with one of the ministries [see the online links to newsletters, brochures and contact info].
- Schedule a visit with one of the ministries or invite them to come to you.
- Find out where people who experience injustice and poverty are in your community and get into relationship with them.
- Call and ask the ministries how you can pray for them and let them know how they can pray for you.
- Offer yourself rather than your solutions!

Galatians text: “The whole law is summed up in the command, Love your neighbor.” How do we love these our Neighbors in Solidarity?

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