



PENTECOST XXVI  
09.17.2023

Struggle at the Crossroads

**Prelude – The Band**

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**Orientation – Amy Sens**

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**“Success is a little like wrestling a gorilla. You don’t quit when you’re tired – you quit when the gorilla is tired.”**

**-Robert Strauss**

**Song – Dancing in the Dark – Bruce Springsteen – The Band**

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I get up in the evenin'  
And I ain't got nothin' to say  
I come home in the mornin'  
I go to bed feelin' the same way  
I ain't nothin' but tired  
Man, I'm just tired and bored with myself  
Hey there, baby, I could use just a little help

You can't start a fire  
You can't start a fire without a spark  
This gun's for hire  
Even if we're just dancin' in the dark

Messages keeps gettin' clearer  
Radio's on and I'm movin' 'round my place  
I check my look in the mirror  
Wanna change my clothes, my hair, my face  
Man, I ain't gettin' nowhere  
I'm just livin' in a dump like this  
There's somethin' happenin' somewhere  
Baby, I just know that there is

You can't start a fire  
You can't start a fire without a spark  
This gun's for hire  
Even if we're just dancin' in the dark

You sit around gettin' older  
There's a joke here somewhere and it's on me  
I'll shake this world off my shoulders  
Come on, baby, the laugh's on me

Stay on the streets of this town  
And they'll be carvin' you up alright  
They say you gotta stay hungry  
Hey baby, I'm just about starvin' tonight  
I'm dyin' for some action  
I'm sick of sittin' 'round here tryin' to write  
this book  
I need a love reaction  
Come on now, baby, gimme just one look

You can't start a fire  
Sittin' 'round cryin' over a broken heart  
This gun's for hire  
Even if we're just dancin' in the dark  
You can't start a fire  
Worryin' about your little world fallin' apart  
This gun's for hire  
Even if we're just dancin' in the dark  
Even if we're just dancin' in the dark  
Even if we're just dancin' in the dark  
Even if we're just dancin' in the dark

**Community Welcome – Gordy Family**

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## Kid's Breakout

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God Be In My Head  
God be in my head  
God be in my words  
God be in my heart  
God be in my hands  
God be in my whole self

## Passing the Peace

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### Reading One – “The Messenger” by Ann Stanford

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I don't deny that I believe in ghosts  
Myself being one. No, not the ultimate last  
Spirit, I mean, but this a messenger.  
Soft, soft, last night half falling into sleep  
I rose like smoke, up, curving past the window  
Floating, a grey cloud seaward, slow and pale.

And then, the wings!

Did you hear the birds piling against your window?  
A snow of wings, crowding and gentle, crying  
Over and over, each with the single errand  
Light cannot bring, nor ever my tongue would say.  
Archaic doves, rustling your sleep, and calling  
Crowding upon you, drifting and crying love.

### Psalm 103:(1-7), 8-13 Benedic, anima mea

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#### REFRAIN:

**Bless the Lord, O my soul, bless his holy Name.**

**Bless the Lord, O my soul,  
and forget not all his benefits.  
He forgives all your sins  
and heals all your infirmities.**

**REFRAIN**

**He redeems your life from the grave  
and crowns you with mercy and loving-kindness;  
He satisfies you with good things,  
and your youth is renewed like an eagle's.**

**REFRAIN**

The Lord executes righteousness  
and judgment for all who are oppressed.  
He made his ways known to Moses  
and his works to the children of Israel.  
The Lord is full of compassion and mercy,  
slow to anger and of great kindness.  
He will not always accuse us,  
nor will he keep his anger for ever.

**REFRAIN**

He has not dealt with us according to our sins,  
nor rewarded us according to our wickedness.  
For as the heavens are high above the earth,  
so is his mercy great upon those who fear him.

**REFRAIN**

As far as the east is from the west,  
so far has he removed our sins from us.  
As a father cares for his children,  
so does the Lord care for those who fear him.

**REFRAIN**

**Prayers of the People** – Jim Hamilton

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**Song – Jacob at the River** – Amy Sens - The Band

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1. Left alone on the river's shore  
As his family crosses o'er  
Jacob's wheel of life has turned  
He thinks of bridges that he's burned

**Chorus:**

The river runs, the river rolls  
Bending and curving as it goes  
Washing all that's false away  
From the night into the day  
Until all that's left behind  
Is hard-won truth and a gentle mind.

2. Stepping out to meet his fate,  
The shore is dark, the hour late  
Who is this stranger in the night?  
At what cost to win the fight?

**Chorus**

3. There are times in our lives  
God is a stranger in the night  
Though we struggle we will find  
Blessings on the other side

**Chorus**

**Reading Two:** Genesis 32:22-32 (CEB) – Jim Hamilton

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Jacob got up during the night, took his two wives, his two women servants, and his eleven sons, and crossed the Jabbok River's shallow water. He took them and everything that

belonged to him, and he helped them cross the river. But Jacob stayed apart by himself, and a man wrestled with him until dawn broke. When the man saw that he couldn't defeat Jacob, he grabbed Jacob's thigh and tore a muscle in Jacob's thigh as he wrestled with him. The man said, "Let me go because the dawn is breaking."

But Jacob said, "I won't let you go until you bless me."

He said to Jacob, "What's your name?" and he said, "Jacob." Then he said, "Your name won't be Jacob any longer, but Israel, because you struggled with God and with men and won."

Jacob also asked and said, "Tell me your name."

But he said, "Why do you ask for my name?" and he blessed Jacob there. Jacob named the place Peniel, "because I've seen God face-to-face, and my life has been saved." The sun rose as Jacob passed Peniel, limping because of his thigh. Therefore, Israelites don't eat the tendon attached to the thigh muscle to this day, because he grabbed Jacob's thigh muscle at the tendon.

#### **Take, O Take Me As I Am – The Band**

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**Take, O take me as I am;  
Summon out what I shall be;  
Set your seal upon my heart  
And live in me.**

#### **A Discussion – Amy Sens**

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#### **Offering**

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**"I have found that among its other benefits, giving liberates the soul of the giver."**

**– Maya Angelou**

#### **Boundless Love – John Prine – The Band**

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**I woke up this morning to a garbage truck  
Looks like this ol' horseshoe's done  
run out of luck  
If I came home, would you let me in?  
Fry me some pork chops and forgive my sin?  
Surround me with your boundless love  
Confound me with your boundless love**

**I was drowning in the sea, lost as I could be  
When you found me with your boundless love  
Sometimes my ol' heart  
is like a washing machine  
It bounces around 'til my soul comes clean**

And when I'm clean and hung out to dry  
I'm gonna make you laugh until you cry

Surround me with your boundless love  
Confound me with your boundless love  
I was drowning in the sea, lost as I could be  
When you found me with your boundless love

If by chance I should find myself at risk  
A-falling from this jagged cliff  
I look below, and I look above  
I'm surrounded by your boundless love

Surround me with your boundless love

**Celebration of Eucharist – Jim Hamilton**

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*All are welcome at the Eucharistic table. If you do not wish to partake, feel free to come forward for a blessing, or to take this time for meditation and personal reflection.*

**Prayer of Thanksgiving**

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**Announcements and Commissioning – Vaughn Vigil**

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**Monday Online Bible study – at 7:30 on Zoom The Challenge of Paul**

**Monday Evening in-person Bible Study? – 7pm**

**Yoga – 5:30 Wednesdays**

**Meditation – 8pm Wednesdays online**

**Youth Group – Sept 24<sup>th</sup> after church**

**Prayer & Blessing – Amy Sens**

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**Song – Forgiveness – Elephant Revival – The Band**

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I have become the devil  
To realize that I'm divine  
I have been living with demons  
Last night I left them by the fire  
In my quest I seek forgiveness  
In my love, I will forgive  
I have lied to see what truth is  
The burns heal, the smoke clears away

Confound me with your boundless love  
I was drowning in the sea, lost as I could be  
When you found me with your boundless love

You dumbfound me with your boundless love  
You surround me with your boundless love

Oh, my love  
I have returned to you  
You were there all along  
While my head was turned

I have deceived many angels  
Including that one of myself  
I have been living in poverty  
Because I couldn't see my wealth

**I have been defined by hate  
I have been defined by pain  
By the powers vested  
The waters wash it all away**

**Oh, my love  
I have returned to you  
You were there all along  
While my head was turned**

**Oh my love, saturate me  
Oh my love, room to breathe  
Oh my love, completely surround me  
Oh my love**

**Dismissal – Jim Hamilton**

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