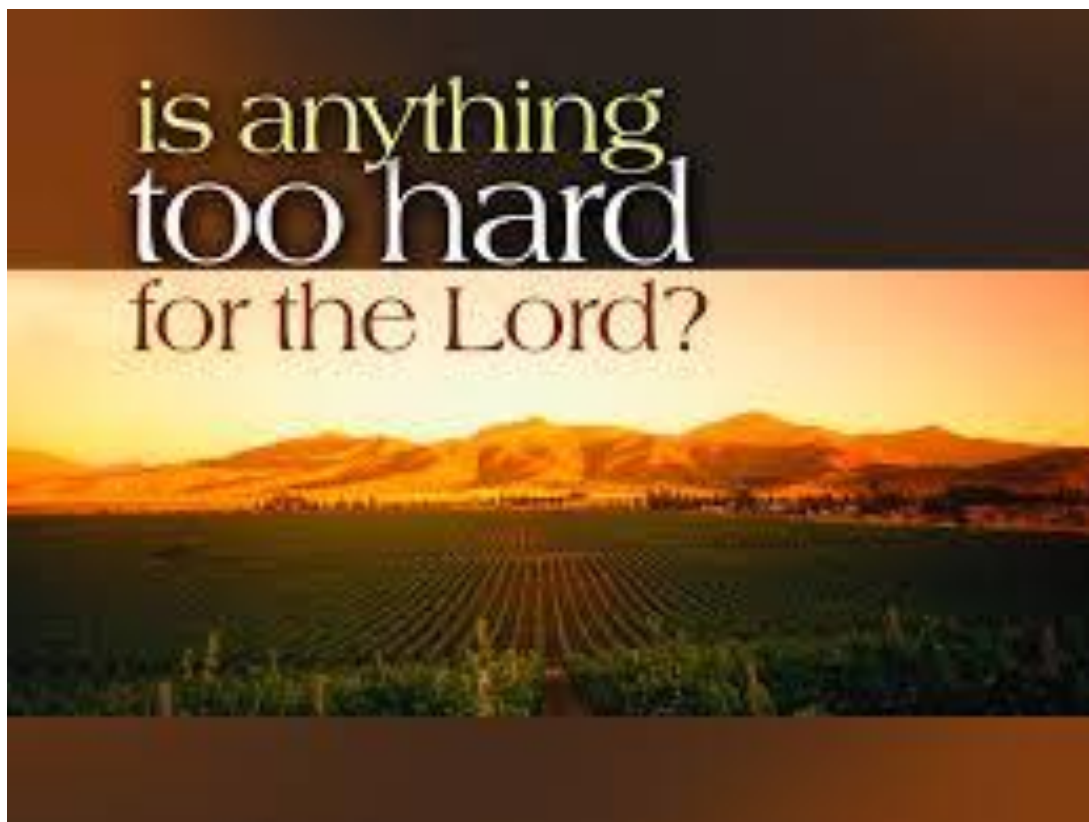




*This Sunday at St. Luke's Blue Ridge  
July 23, 2017*

## The Sixth Sunday after Trinity



Today's Old Testament lesson (MP) records a theophany. A theophany is a manifestation of God in the Bible that is tangible to the human senses.

Three strangers appeared at Abraham's tent, one of whom is with God Himself, perhaps a manifestation of the pre-incarnate Christ. God announced that Abraham's aged wife Sarah was going to have a baby. Sarah, who was listening in from inside the tent, laughed. In response, the One identified with God asked: Is anything too hard for the Lord? The answer to this question is, of course, no.

## *The Collect for the Sixth Sunday after Trinity*

O GOD, who hast prepared for those who love thee such good things as pass man's understanding; Pour into our hearts such love toward thee, that we, loving thee above all things, may obtain thy promises, which exceed all that we can desire; through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen.*

### **THE EPISTLE (H.C.) – Romans 6:3-11 (J.B. Phillips)**

*Dead to sin; alive to God*

**6**<sup>1-11</sup> Now what is our response to be? Shall we sin to our heart's content and see how far we can exploit the grace of God? What a ghastly thought! We, who have died to sin—how could we live in sin a moment longer? Have you forgotten that all of us who were baptised into Jesus Christ were, by that very action, sharing in his death? We were dead and buried with him in baptism, so that just as he was raised from the dead by that splendid Revelation of the Father's power so we too might rise to life on a new plane altogether. If we have, as it were, shared his death, let us rise and live our new lives with him! Let us never forget that our old selves died with him on the cross that the tyranny of sin over us might be broken—for a dead man can safely be said to be immune to the power of sin. And if we were dead men with him we can believe that we shall also be men newly alive with him. We can be sure that the risen Christ never dies again—death's power to touch him is finished. He died, because of sin, once: he lives for God for ever. In the same way look upon yourselves as dead to the appeal and power of sin but alive and sensitive to the call of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

NOTE: Here Paul points out what becoming a Christian means, and he takes his readers back to their baptism to do so. Most of them had been pagans (non-Jews), and baptism meant a clean break with their sinful life. By passing under the waters of baptism it was as if they had died to their old way of life.

In their baptism the new converts became identified with Christ and Christ with them -- in death and resurrection.

### **THE GOSPEL (H.C.) – St. Matthew 5:20-26 (J.B. Phillips)**

*The high standards of the Kingdom*

**17-20** “You must not think I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to complete them. Indeed, I assure you that, while Heaven and earth last, the Law will not lose a single dot or comma until its purpose is complete. This means that whoever now relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches men to do the same will himself be called least in Heaven. But whoever teaches and practises them will be called great in the kingdom of Heaven. For I tell you that your goodness must be a far better thing than the goodness of the scribes and Pharisees before you can set foot in the kingdom of Heaven at all!

<sup>21-22</sup> “You have heard that it was said to the people in the old days, ‘You shall not murder’, and anyone who does must stand his trial. But I say to you that anyone who is angry with his brother must stand his trial; anyone who contemptuously calls his brother a fool must face the supreme court; and anyone who looks on his brother as a lost soul is himself heading straight for the fire of destruction.

<sup>23-24</sup> “So that if, while you are offering your gift at the altar, you should remember that your brother has something against you, you must leave your gift there before the altar and go away. Make your peace with your brother first, then come and offer your gift.”

<sup>25-26</sup> “Come to terms quickly with your opponent while you have the chance, or else he may hand you over to the judge and the judge in turn hand you over to the officer of the court and you will be thrown into prison. Believe me, you will never get out again till you have paid your last farthing!”

NOTE: In the Gospel our Lord teaches that Christian standards are higher than others and binding upon those who would love God above all things. This is illustrated from the sixth Commandment. Jesus shows that a man may break it not only by murder but also by showing anger, contempt and hatred.

Further, a Christian has a positive duty; he must keep the Commandment by being ready not only forgive but also to ask for forgiveness and to apologize when he has been at fault. He ought never to "draw near" unless he is "in love and charity" with his neighbours. (H. W. Dobson)

## READINGS FOR 10 A.M. SERVICE

### OLD TESTAMENT LESSON (M.P.) -- Genesis 18:1-16 (GNT)

#### *A Son Is Promised to Abraham*

**18** The Lord appeared to Abraham at the sacred trees of Mamre. As Abraham was sitting at the entrance of his tent during the hottest part of the day, <sup>2</sup> he looked up and saw three men standing there. As soon as he saw them, he ran out to meet them. Bowing down with his face touching the ground, <sup>3</sup> he said, “Sirs, please do not pass by my home without stopping; I am here to serve you. <sup>4</sup> Let me bring some water for you to wash your feet; you can rest here beneath this tree. <sup>5</sup> I will also bring a bit of food; it will give you strength to continue your journey. You have honored me by coming to my home, so let me serve you.”

They replied, “Thank you; we accept.”

<sup>6</sup> Abraham hurried into the tent and said to Sarah, “Quick, take a sack of your best flour, and bake some bread.” <sup>7</sup> Then he ran to the herd and picked out a calf that was tender and fat, and gave it to a servant, who hurried to get it ready. <sup>8</sup> He took some cream, some milk, and the meat, and set the food before the men. There under the tree he served them himself, and they ate.

<sup>9</sup> Then they asked him, “Where is your wife Sarah?”

“She is there in the tent,” he answered.

<sup>10</sup> One of them said, “Nine months from now I will come back, and your wife Sarah will have a son.”

Sarah was behind him, at the door of the tent, listening. <sup>11</sup> Abraham and Sarah were very old, and Sarah had stopped having her monthly periods. <sup>12</sup> So Sarah laughed to herself and said, “Now that I am old and worn out, can I still enjoy sex? And besides, my husband is old too.” <sup>13</sup> Then the Lord asked Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh and say, ‘Can I really have a child when I am so old?’” <sup>14</sup> Is anything too hard for the Lord? As I said, nine months from now I will return, and Sarah will have a son.” <sup>15</sup> Because Sarah was afraid, she denied it. “I didn't laugh,” she said. “Yes, you did,” he replied. “You laughed.” <sup>16</sup> Then the men left and went to a place where they could look down at Sodom, and Abraham went with them to send them on their way.

## **NEW TESTAMENT LESSON (M.P.) -- Romans 4:13-25 (NRSV)**

### *God's Promise Realized through Faith*

<sup>13</sup> For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. <sup>14</sup> If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. <sup>15</sup> For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

<sup>16</sup> For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, <sup>17</sup> as it is written, ‘I have made you the father of many nations’)—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. <sup>18</sup> Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become ‘the father of many nations’, according to what was said, ‘So numerous shall your descendants be.’ <sup>19</sup> He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah’s womb. <sup>20</sup> No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, <sup>21</sup> being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. <sup>22</sup> Therefore his faith ‘was reckoned to him as righteousness.’ <sup>23</sup> Now the words, ‘it was reckoned to him’, were written not for his sake alone, <sup>24</sup> but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, <sup>25</sup> who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

## SERVICES ON TRINITY VI

- **8:15 a.m.** – Holy Communion (said service)

*A quiet meditative service*

Preacher: The Rector

Celebrant: The Rector

Lector: Sam Sartain

Acolyte / Server: Tony McConnell

- **10:00 a.m.** – Morning Prayer and Sermon (choral)

*Classic Anglican morning service with exposition of Scripture and hymns*

Preacher: The Rev. Dr. Thomas S. Heard, Scholar in Residence and Deacon

Officiant: The Rector

Acolyte: Sally Hess

Lay Reader: Dan Hess

Ushers: Roger, Teresa and Stephen Wankel

Theme: The Importance of Faith

## **HOLY COMMUNION -- TUESDAY, JULY 25**

The Holy Communion will be celebrated at noon on the Feast of St. James the Apostle, Tuesday, July 25, in the chapel.

### **REGISTRATION BEGUN FOR GEORGIA ANGLICAN MEN'S CONFERENCE**

Registration has begun for the 6th annual Georgia Anglican Men's Conference set for Oct. 13-15 at St. Luke's Church, Blue Ridge. This year's theme is "Christianity: What's in it for *me*?". Registration forms are located in the Narthex.

This year's event will include a "Bishop's Dinner" open to all. Following the dinner, the Rt. Rev. Dr. William W. Millsaps will speak on "The Persecuted Church: An Anglican Response". Cost for the dinner is \$15 per person.

For additional information, contact: Roger Johnson, Tony McConnell, the Rev. Ron Wikander or the Rector.

### **A CALL TO SERVICE**

Our acolyte and lay reader roster needs additional people. Please contact Tony McConnell, Verger, if you would like to serve, (706) 633-8379, [mrwam@tds.net](mailto:mrwam@tds.net).

### **ALTAR GUILD OPPORTUNITIES**

Volunteers are also needed for the Altar Guild. Please contact Pat McConnell for more information: (706) 362-8443.

### **'TEC' SOUGHT**

A person to assist Pat Dearing with audio, visual and wireless internet operations is being sought. For more information, please speak to Mr. Dearing or Senior Warden Jim Yacavone.

## **REMEMBER THE NEEDY**

## **EVERY TIME YOU COME TO CHURCH**



*Please bring one or more item for the needy -- paper, soap products, tinned and dried food, etc. Leave in Narthex. Items will be distributed through North Georgia Community Action Agency*



A sign-up sheet for Altar flowers is available in Thomason Hall for 2017.  
Please sign up for days you wish to commemorate.

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