

**Lakewood Congregational Church  
24 May 2020**

**Breathing In John 17**



*17After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, 'Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, <sup>2</sup>since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. <sup>3</sup>And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. <sup>4</sup>I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. <sup>5</sup>So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.*

*6 'I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. <sup>7</sup>Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; <sup>8</sup>for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. <sup>9</sup>I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. <sup>10</sup>All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. <sup>11</sup>And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one. John 17:1-11*

♥ Jesus is praying before he fully ascends to heaven. While lyrical, this reading has a lot of commas and prepositions. Read it slowly, first. Then, speak it aloud. Read it aloud a second time, this time with the awareness that you are reading a love letter, between Jesus and God and us. It is a love letter that the cloud of witnesses from Hebrews heard. It is a love letter and prayer sent to every believer, in every time, in every place. Believe that this is for you, too.

♥ Kate Huey in her *Weekly Seeds* notes that Jesus sees the disciples as God sees them, as a band of great promise. *There is much to be said for seeing Christ in each other, but there is also something to be said for seeing ourselves as God sees us, with steadfast love and compassion, and with hope, too, for the future and what is yet to be.*

Imagine looking into the pool of water to the right, or look in a mirror or window. See yourself as God sees you. How is Jesus glorified in you? Write or record your observations.



♥ *Do you think, in general that people are doing the best they can?* Brené Brown asks this question in her book, Rising Strong. Her chapter is entitled "Sewer Rats and Scofflaws." Steve, her husband, is a pediatrician and he responded to her question saying, *"I don't know. I really don't. All I know is that my life is better when I assume that people are doing their best. It keeps me out of judgment and lets me focus on what is, and not what should or could be."*

Remember that Jesus is speaking about the disciples when he is praying today's verses -- the disciples who didn't understand him, who fell asleep in the Garden, who betrayed him, who didn't know how to respond to an empty tomb, who locked doors, who were afraid, and who were slow to notice him in their presence. We are also disciples.

How did Jesus respond? Jesus pressed "send" on the referral that all of us want: *I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. <sup>7</sup>Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; <sup>8</sup>for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. <sup>9</sup>I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. <sup>10</sup>All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. <sup>11</sup>And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.*

Hold Brown's question, Steve's response, and Jesus' referral in your heart and mind.

- Who are the sewer rats and scofflaws in your life?
- Where is your judgment impairing relationships, within yourself and with others?
- Where do you need to forgive yourself and others?
- What steps or actions are you willing to initiate to respond like Jesus?
- What do we need to do, as a faith community, to respond like Jesus?
- How, specifically, can you and we love, so all may be one?

♥ Draw a heart on a piece of paper or make one out of playdough, wire or dental floss.

Imagine a vertical line in the middle. On the outside of one half, think about or add what you love about God. On the outside of the other half, think about or add what you love about Jesus. In the middle, add what you love about the Holy Spirit.

Then, remember how much God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit loves you.



♥ Sing this beloved hymn. On YouTube, you may select your favorite style of music using this tune.

Jesus loves me! This I know, for the Bible tells me so. Little ones to him belong; they are weak, but he is strong.

Refrain:

*Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me!  
Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.*

Jesus loves me! This I know, as he loved so long ago, taking children on his knee, saying, "Let them come to me."

Refrain

Jesus love me still today, walking with me on my way, wanting as a friend to give light and love to all who live. Refrain

## References

### Ferns

<https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.pinterest.com%2Fpin%2F748934613003605730%2F&psig=AOvVaw176GB5t4LYAtvfJIK89BVj&ust=1590152466665000&source=images&cd=vfe&ved=0CAIQjRxqFwoTCPiCkPeBxekCFQAAAAAdAAAAABAO>

### Stone with water

<https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.pinterest.com%2Fmarilynkoehne%2Fheart-shapes-in-nature%2F&psig=AOvVaw176GB5t4LYAtvfJIK89BVj&ust=1590152466665000&source=images&cd=vfe&ved=0CAIQjRxqFwoTCPiCkPeBxekCFQAAAAAdAAAAABAb>

### Kate Huey, Weekly Seeds

[https://www.ucc.org/worship\\_samuel\\_sermon\\_seeds\\_may\\_24\\_2020](https://www.ucc.org/worship_samuel_sermon_seeds_may_24_2020)

**Brené Brown**, Rising Strong: How the Ability to Reset Transforms the Way we Live, Love, Parent, and Lead. New York, Random House, 2017. Steve's quotation, page 113.

### Flowers-Bleeding Hearts

<https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.robertharding.com%2Fblog%2F2015%2F02%2F10%2Fheart-shapes-in-nature%2F&psig=AOvVaw176GB5t4LYAtvfJIK89BVj&ust=1590152466665000&source=images&cd=vfe&ved=0CAIQjRxqFwoTCPiCkPeBxekCFQAAAAAdAAAAABAD>

### Cactus

<https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.robertharding.com%2Fblog%2F2015%2F02%2F10%2Fheart-shapes-in-nature%2F&psig=AOvVaw176GB5t4LYAtvfJIK89BVj&ust=1590152466665000&source=images&cd=vfe&ved=0CAIQjRxqFwoTCPiCkPeBxekCFQAAAAAdAAAAABAI>

### Cloud

<https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.adventure-journal.com%2F2011%2F02%2F25-awesome-hearts-found-in-nature%2F&psig=AOvVaw176GB5t4LYAtvfJIK89BVj&ust=1590152466665000&source=images&cd=vfe&ved=0CAIQjRxqFwoTCPiCkPeBxekCFQAAAAAdAAAAABAj>

### Chalice Hymnal, #113 Jesus Loves Me!

Words: Anna B. Warner, 1860 and David R. McGuire, c. 1970

Music: William B. Bradbury, 1862