

**Worship in the Home  
& At the Farm  
Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost  
September 13, 2020**



*In this time of world-wide crisis, congregations throughout this church are not able to gather for worship as the body of Christ. While we all cannot be together in person, we can hear the word of God and hold each other in prayer.*

**Announcements**

**Prelude**

*Alex Snyder*

**Confession and Forgiveness**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who creates, redeems, and sustains us and all of creation. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another. Faithful God, **have mercy on us. We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We turn from your loving embrace and go our own ways. We pass judgment on one another before examining ourselves. We place our own needs before those of our neighbors. We keep your gift of salvation to ourselves. Make us humble, cast away our transgressions, and turn us again to life in you through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

God hears the cries of all who call out in need, and through his death and resurrection, Christ has made us his own. Hear the truth that God proclaims: Your sins are forgiven in the name of † Jesus Christ. Led by the Holy Spirit, live in freedom and newness to do God's work in the world. **Amen.**

**Prayer of the Day**

Let us pray....O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

**First Reading:** Genesis 50:15-21

## **Psalm 103:8-13**

<sup>8</sup>LORD, you are full of compassion and mercy, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love;

<sup>9</sup>**you will not always accuse us, nor will you keep your anger forever.**

<sup>10</sup>You have not dealt with us according to our sins, nor repaid us according to our iniquities.

<sup>11</sup>**For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is your steadfast love for those who fear you.**

<sup>12</sup>As far as the east is from the west, so far have you removed our transgressions from us.

<sup>13</sup>**As a father has compassion for his children, so you have compassion for those who fear you, O LORD.**

**Second Reading:** Romans 14:1-12

**Gospel:** Matthew 18:21-35

<sup>21</sup>Peter came and said to Jesus, “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” <sup>22</sup>Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

<sup>23</sup>“For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. <sup>24</sup>When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; <sup>25</sup>and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. <sup>26</sup>So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ <sup>27</sup>And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. <sup>28</sup>But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, ‘Pay what you owe.’ <sup>29</sup>Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ <sup>30</sup>But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. <sup>31</sup>When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. <sup>32</sup>Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. <sup>33</sup>Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ <sup>34</sup>And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. <sup>35</sup>So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

**Homily**

## Reflection

The readings accuse us: like Joseph's brothers, we are afraid of people we have betrayed. Like Paul's readers, we often argue with each other about issues that do not matter. Like Peter in Matthew, we want to limit our forgiveness of others. But One who is greater than Joseph is here. Jesus Christ was thrown into a deeper pit than Joseph when he was taken to the cross. Yet, in the resurrection he has become an even greater source of forgiveness and bread. Like the fictional king of the parable, God in Christ has forgiven us — each one of us — an impossible debt: 10,000 talents being something like 150,000 years of salary for a skilled worker. Strengthened by that forgiveness, poured over us today by the Spirit alive in this word, we are enabled again and again to forgive our neighbor whose debt to us, by comparison, is like only a few weeks of salary. Renewed in this mercy, we will live and die to the Lord.

## Prayers of Intercession

Drawn together in the compassion of God, we pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

God of open arms, make Christians into signs of your gracious welcome, to both members and newcomers, whether meeting physically or digitally. Strengthen faith through new ventures for education and growth. Bless bishops, pastors, and deacons for their work in this unprecedented time. O God, you are full of compassion; **receive our prayer.**

God of lands and seas, continue your care for your creation. Where human selfishness has brought ruin and destruction, we ask you to heal and renew your earth. Preserve the lands from fire and storm. Protect the sources of food that your creatures need for life. O God, you are full of compassion; **receive our prayer.**

God of justice, lead the nations away from the ways of violence. Guide the United Nations and other organizations that seek reconciliation across national borders. Show families, neighborhoods, and nations how to welcome diversity while sharing common ground. Preserve our election season from abuse and rancor. O God, you are full of compassion; **receive our prayer.**

God of our homeland, visit the American cities that are addressing local racism. Stand with both protesters and police, that civil society may be preserved and improved. Bring both healing and justice to our land. O God, you are full of compassion; **receive our prayer.**

God of the sufferers, visit prisons and care homes with health and hope. Free victims of human trafficking and forced labor. Deliver all who are bound by debt. Feed all who hunger and provide safety to migrants. Protect firefighters and first responders. Heal the sick, especially those we name here before you: O God, you are full of compassion; **receive our prayer.**

God of goodness, once more we beg for a way through the pandemic. Comfort the afflicted. Support medical workers. Prepare a vaccine. O God, you are full of compassion; **receive our prayer.**

God of tender power, we live to you. Hear now, we pray, the desires of our hearts. O God, you are full of compassion; **receive our prayer.**

Whether we live or whether we die, we are yours. We thank you for those who have led us in the faith, especially those we commemorate this week: John Chrysostom, bishop Cyprian, Hildegard of Bingen, and Dag Hammarskjöld. Hold us with them in your everlasting love. O God, you are full of compassion; **receive our prayer.**

All these things and whatever else you see that we need, we entrust to your mercy; through Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

### **Communion Liturgy**

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord...through Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray:  
**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

### **Music for Meditation**

#### **Blessing**

Mothering God, Father, ✚ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you and lead you into the way of truth and life. **Amen.**

#### **Postlude**

*Alex Snyder*

## **Sending**

Go in peace. Remember the poor. **Thanks be to God.**

*There will be no Zoom today unless outdoor worship is cancelled because of rain.*

**Committee Chairs:** Remember to get meeting dates and times to Lori via email (stmatthewluth@aol.com) so they can be on the weekly schedule.

**Weekly Bulletins and Messengers** are available on the website (stmatthewlc.com) for viewing or printing.

**Prayers are needed for our homebound:** Shirley Acker, Carl & Dawn Alexy, Verna Blough, Fred Brandenburg, Jim Calvert, Clyde Claycomb, Betty Helsel, Doris Henderson, Gene Henry, Jere Hess, Gerald Hoover, Janet Kreider, Ginny Sell, Dan Sinal, Don Smith, Nancy Uber, Joy Williams.

**Prayer Concerns:**, John Aljets, Pastor Denise Arpino, Randy Barrett, Elaine Buchart, Mark Calvert, Diane Cappel, Dwight Ciccotelli, Greg Comer, Jesse Fay, Joe Fay, Brian Fleck, Jim Freyer, Reggie Gilbert, Shari Gilbert, Ryan Guyer, Erica & Helena Hallam, Bill Hainaut, Dan Hershberger, Stephen Hinish, Marilyn Horton, Amber Itle, Jenny, Fred Kensinger, Janet Kreider, Darren Kreutzer, Kristen Malloy, Ryder McDermitt, Betty McDowell, Zowe Orczeck, Aunt Mica, Deb Peters, Alana Rhodes, John Russell, Paul Ruth, Dan Sinal, Barbara Smith, Luther Steele, Katie Stormer, Wyatt Sweinhart, Cindy Thomas, Carol Weyandt, Pete Williams, Robert Winston, Jody Zelanko, and for our **Missionaries: Rev. Lesley Hand, On Eagle's Wings, Elizabeth Hendrickson.**

**Our college students:** Christopher Bush, Olivia Day, Jacob Orczeck.

## **September Worship Schedule**

TODAY, Worship, **Sept. 13 is at the Kreider Farm at 10:00 AM**

Sunday: 9:30 AM Worship on Facebook, 10:15ish Fellowship on Zoom

Monday & Friday: Hymn Devotions at 9AM

Tuesday & Thursday: Morning Prayer 9AM & Night Prayer at 9PM

Tuesday & Friday: Midday Kid's Devotions (without song time)

Wednesday: Holden Evening Prayer at 8PM

## Serving God and Us Today

Our Pastor – Rev. Traci Marriott Bowman

Our Musician – Alex Snyder

Our Administrative Assistant – Lori Tremmel

Our Assistant Administrative Assistant – Laura Orczeck

Our Sexton – Bill Brown

Our Audio/Video Tech – Shawn Orczeck

Our Offering Counters – Beth Garner, Jim Barley

Third Quarter Ventures in Faith to “*OEW & Missionaries*”

**Monthly Messenger’s:** If you would like a mailed copy of the Messenger, please let Lori know in the church office either by email [stmatthewluth@aol.com](mailto:stmatthewluth@aol.com) or by phone 793-2413. Always remember that the Messenger is also found on the Website at: [stmatthewlc.com](http://stmatthewlc.com).

## Prayer Vigil

To say we are living in a world greatly in need of prayer may seem like a gross understatement. In 2020 we have witnessed the ongoing COVID 19 Pandemic, an economy that is struggling, racial tensions and injustices, political divides, food and housing insecurities, indecision regarding returning to school, cancellation of entertainment and sporting events, etc, etc. if we ever needed our Lord to “HEAR OUR PRAYER” it is now. We are yearning to return to our churches, participate in communion and fellowship even if it is at a distance. In the difficult times and the “normal” times, Jesus has always been there for us. We have only to knock and the door will be opened.



Won’t you join us in our 12 hour prayer vigil by giving one half hour in prayer from your home or wherever you may be on Saturday, October 3, 2020. If you would prefer a morning time from 6 AM until noon, please call Elaine Buchart at 793-3953. Les Loomis will be scheduling from noon until 6 PM at 1-570-885-0572.

## **Readings for the Week:**

**Monday** (Holy Cross Day) John 3:13-17. **Tuesday** Romans 14:13—15:2.

**Wednesday** (commemoration of Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, martyr, died around 258) Genesis 50:22-26. **Thursday** (commemoration of Hildegard, Abbess of Bingen, died 1179) Psalm 145:1-8. **Friday** (commemoration of Dag Hammarskjöld, renewer of society, died 1961) 2 Corinthians 13:5-10. **Saturday** Zephaniah 2:13-15. **Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost** Jonah 3:10—4:11; Psalm 145:1-8; Philippians 1:21-30; Matthew 20:1-16.

Reflection text: Gordon Lathrop. Intercessory Prayer: Gail Ramshaw

Portions from Evangelical Lutheran Worship and sundaysandseasons.com, © 2020 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress.

Readings from *Readings for the Assembly* © 1995, 1996, 1997 Augsburg Fortress. Citations from the Revised Common Lectionary © 1992 Consultation on Common Texts. Scripture quotations from NRSV Bible, Copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America, adapted and edited with permission by Gordon Lathrop and Gail Ramshaw.

## **\*\*Volunteers Needed\*\***

When we resume in-person worship (currently planned for Sunday, October 4th and onward) we will need a designated recorder at each service to take names and phone numbers to help with contact tracing in the event that someone tests positive for COVID-19. This will be a one-person (or one-couple) job for each of the three weekly services (9:00 a.m. Sunday in the nave, 10:30 a.m. Sunday in the fellowship hall, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday in the nave—a different recorder for each service). Recorders/Volunteers will be able to take information from behind a safety partition. If you are willing to help, please contact Lori at 793-2413 or stmatthewluth@aol.com with your availability.

## **DeYogaVotions In the Park For September**

Yoga with meditation on scripture with Pastor Traci will be offered on Saturday, September 26th, at 9 a.m. at Canoe Creek State Park. This will be an outdoor socially-distanced events. Please bring your own mat (and block if you prefer) and meet to the right of the main parking area. Masks should be worn until everyone is in place and ready to begin.

## **Blanket Sunday**

October 4, 2020

Blanket Sunday is a ministry that is traditionally held on the first Sunday of October. Persons in every congregation of the Allegheny Synod are invited to give a special offering for the purchase of blankets for Lutheran World Relief. You will find this special offering envelope in your offering booklets. If you have an offering number instead of an offering booklet, please write your **“offering number or name”** and **“blankets”** on a **pew envelope**. Your contribution of \$5.00 buys a sturdy blanket which provides shelter, warmth, and security to someone in the world facing disaster. Blanket Sunday is the largest single donation of blankets that takes place throughout the year.