

Worship In Person & At Home

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

October 4, 2020



In this time of world-wide crisis, congregations throughout this church are not able to all gather for worship as the body of Christ.

While we cannot all be together in person, we can hear the word of God and hold each other in prayer.

Announcements

Prelude

Confession & 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.**

Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all. **Amen.**

Prayer of the Day

Beloved God, from you come all things that are good. Lead us by the inspiration of your Spirit to know those things that are right, and by your merciful guidance, help us to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

First Reading: Isaiah 5:1-7

Psalm 80:7-15

⁷Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

⁸**You have brought a vine out of Egypt; you cast out the nations and planted it.**

⁹You cleared the ground for it; it took root and filled the land.

¹⁰**The mountains were covered by its shadow and the towering cedar trees by its boughs.**

¹¹You stretched out its tendrils to the sea and its branches to the river.

¹²**Why have you broken down its wall, so that all who pass by pluck off its grapes?**

¹³The wild boar of the forest has ravaged it, and the beasts of the field have grazed upon it.

¹⁴**Turn now, O God of hosts, look down from heaven;**

¹⁵behold and tend this vine; preserve what your right hand has planted.

Second Reading: Philippians 3:4b-14

Gospel: Matthew 21:33-46

[Jesus said:] ³³“Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. ³⁴When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. ³⁵But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. ³⁶Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. ³⁷Finally he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ ³⁸But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.’ ³⁹So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. ⁴⁰“Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?” ⁴¹They said to Jesus, “The owner will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time.”

⁴²Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the scriptures: ‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord’s doing, and it is amazing in our eyes’?”

⁴³Therefore I tell you, the dominion of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of it. ⁴⁴The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.”

⁴⁵When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. ⁴⁶They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because the people regarded him as a prophet.

Homily

Reflection

Here is an old biblical allegory: Israel is a vineyard from which God, as the vineyard owner, expects to see the good wine of justice and righteousness produced. That image is present in two of our readings as well as the Psalm today. We would misuse this allegory, however, if we make it anti-Semitic, as too many Christians have. We ourselves are now the tenants of that vineyard. We are the ones who have contributed to injustice, to the weeping of the misused, even to bloodshed. The son has died because of us. Still, these texts really are a love-song. We are accused because God loves us, wishing to turn us to hear the gospel. For us, Christ is the rejected stone that has become the corner-stone. In mercy, Christ Jesus has made us his own. In the Spirit, he gives us the good wine of himself. Then, in the power of the resurrection and even by sharing his sufferings, we may begin again to do justice for our neighbors in this needy world.

Prayers of the People

Today, October 4, is St. Francis' Day. Francis cared fervently for the church, the earth and its animals, peace, and the poor. Let us now pray for these concerns:

God most high, we pray for the church: for our bishops, our pastors and deacons, and our own congregation; for the ministry of Pope Francis; for the work of Franciscan friars and sisters; and for churches that are struggling with few resources. That all the baptized may produce good fruit, sowing faith where there is doubt, we pray to you, O God our Redeemer: **in mercy, receive our prayers.**

We pray for the earth and its animals: for farmlands; for animals whose habitat is threatened; for livestock; for all the animals that we raise for human use; for service animals; and for our dear pets. That the earth may be sustained with your care, and that we will sow joy where there is sadness, we pray to you, O God our Creator: **in mercy, receive our prayers.**

We pray for peace: between nations; in our cities; among political rivals; throughout our coming election; between generations; between long-time citizens and new immigrants; in our churches and in our homes. That we may become instruments of your peace, sowing union where there is discord, we pray to you, O God, our Peacemaker: **in mercy, receive our prayers.**

We pray for those who are poor: for those who are unemployed; for migrants; for those who are marginalized by prejudice; for orphans; for school children with no digital access. That we may give assistance where there is poverty and need, we pray to you, O God our Provider: **in mercy, receive our prayers.**

We pray for all who are suffering: for those laid low by the coronavirus; for those who like Francis have painful eye disease; for those living with anxiety; for those whose sorrow is known only to you; for those who will die this day; and for those whose names we call out to you here: . . . That we may sow hope where there is despair, we pray to you, O God our Comforter: **in mercy, receive our prayers.**

We pray, finally for ourselves. Strengthen our faith in Christ, and hear our personal petitions...That we may sow pardon where there is injury and love where there has been hatred, we pray to you, O God our Healer: **in mercy, receive our prayers.**

We praise you, God most high, for all the faithful who have gone before us into the fullness of your life, especially this week the Lutheran pastors Theodor Fliedner and Henry Melchoir Muhlenberg. That at our end, where there is darkness, we will join in your light forever, we pray to you, O God, Eternal One: **in your mercy, receive our prayers.**

Enfold in your loving arms all for whom we pray, as we trust in your salvation through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Communion Liturgy

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Proper Preface & Words of Institution

Lord's Prayer

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 During Communion

Benediction

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

Sending Music

Dismissal

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

Readings for the Week: Monday (Day of Thanksgiving [Canada]) Psalm 34. **Tuesday** Amos 9:5-15. **Wednesday** Song of Solomon 7:10—8:4. **Thursday** (commemoration of Teresa of Avila, teacher, renewer of the church, died 1582) Psalm 96:1-9 [10-13]. **Friday** 1 Peter 5:1-5. **Saturday** (commemoration of Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, martyr, died around 115) Isaiah 14:3-11. **Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost** Isaiah 45:1-7; Psalm 96:1-9 [10-13]; 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10; Matthew 22:15-22.

Reflection text: Gordon Lathrop. Intercessory Prayer: Gail Ramshaw

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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, Helena Bassler, Elaine Buchart, Diane Cappel, Dwight Ciccotelli, Greg Comer, Brian Fleck, Jim Freyer, Shari Gilbert, Erika Hallam, Dan Hershberger, 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.

Prayers and Christian Sympathy are asked for Bob Guyer upon the death of his son, Ryan Guyer, Saturday, September 26, 2020.

Serving God and Us Today

Our Pastor – Rev. Traci Marriott

Our Pianist – Dr. Adam Smith

Our Administrative Assistant – Lori Tremmel

Our Assistant Administrative Assistant – Laura Orczeck

Our Sexton – Bill Brown

Our Audio/Video Tech – Alex Snyder

Our Offering Counters – Beth Garner, Jim Barley

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

****Volunteers Needed****

In-person worship needs RECORDERS. 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.

Blanket Sunday

October 4, 2020

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 OR blank white envelope**. Your contribution of \$5.00 buys a sturdy blanket which provides shelter, warmth, and security to someone in the world facing disaster.