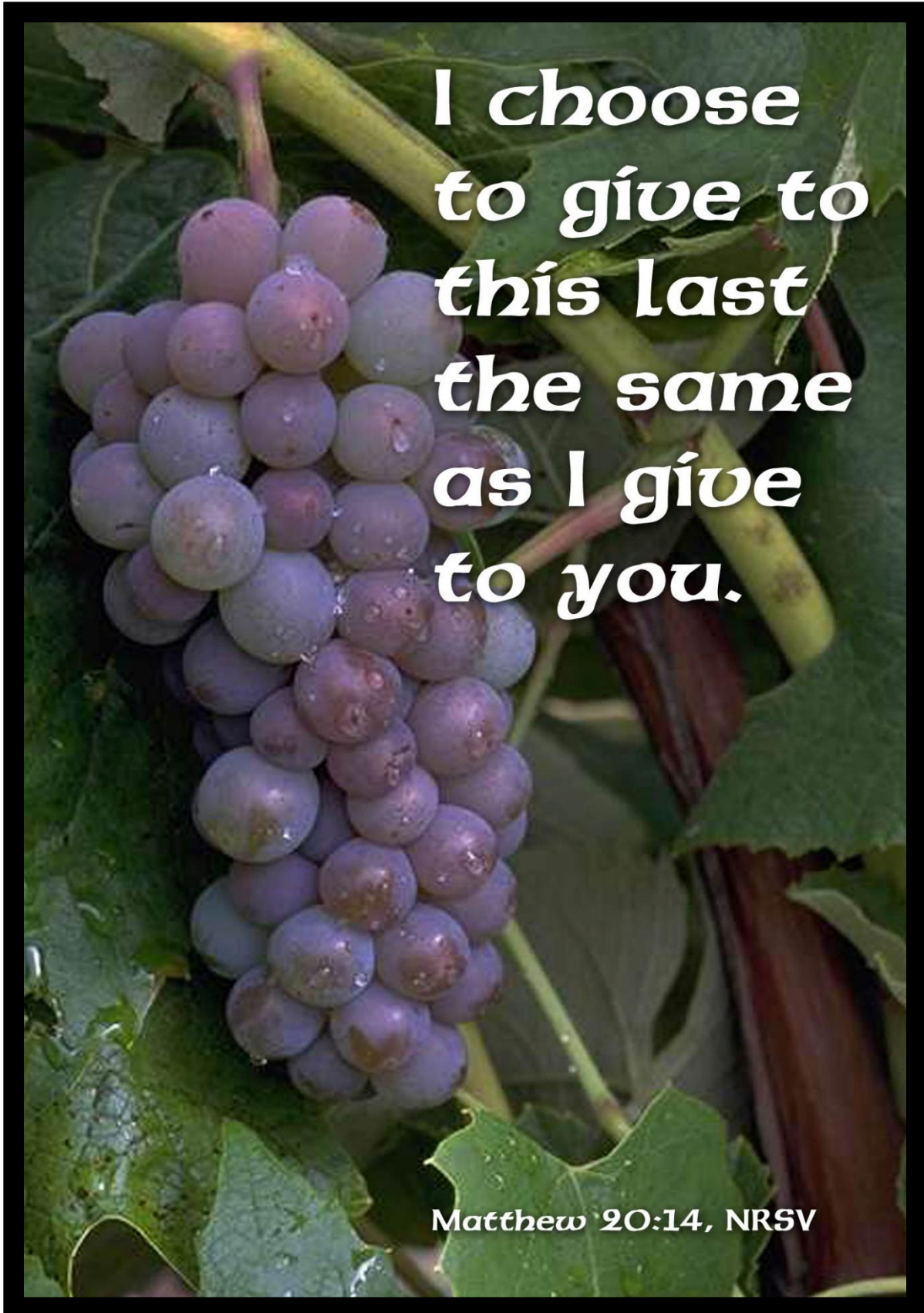


ONE IN CHRIST LUTHERAN PARISH

◆Bethany ◆Immanuel ◆Lunder ◆Silver Lake ◆Winnebago



Pentecost 17

September 24, 2023



ONE IN CHRIST LUTHERAN PARISH

◆ Bethany ◆ Immanuel ◆ Lunder ◆ Silver Lake ◆ Winnebago

Ministers

Every member of the Parish

Pastors (#590-2737 – cell; email pastorbill@oneinchristlutheranparish.org)

Bill Peters

(#590-0727 – cell; email pastorrandy@oneinchristlutheranparish.org)

Randy Baldwin

web page - <http://www.oneinchristlutheranparish.org>

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 24, 2023

COME, HOLY SPIRIT!

We joyfully welcome all guests who are worshipping with us this morning.

We ask you to please sign our guest register. God's Spirit has empowered us to be an united community of faith and encourages us to be a neighbor to all.

SPIRIT, SET OUR HEARTS ON FIRE!

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Hymns are from the Green Hymnal.

(Stand as you are able)*

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

✠ **GATHERING** ✠

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the People of God

*CONFESSION

Let us sing about the holiness of God's name,
and tell of God's wonderful works.

With grateful hearts,

we rejoice in the great deeds of God.

We praise you, O God, for providing direction and nourishment for your people of old.

We praise you for doing the same for us in the person of Jesus Christ.

In him, you set before us a way of life to guide us through the wilderness experiences of our lives - those times common to us all - of illness and grief, disaster and depression, uncertainty and hopelessness.

The gift of Christ's life enables us to cope with these arid times and to have faith that through him, your presence is continually with us, strengthening and supporting us.

May this time of worship be an expression of our wonder and joy that you should care so deeply for us and all people.

This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen

Merciful God, the story of the landowner and the workers turns our ideas about fairness upside down.

We probably would agree with the workers who complained about the seemingly blatantly unfair action of the landowner.

We may puzzle over this parable and dismiss it as not really applying to us.

But every time we suppose that our faithfulness, our status, our piety gives us a special claim on your favor, we need to hear this story of your abundant grace.

Forgive us when we measure the behavior of others against that of ourselves rather than measuring our behavior against yours.

Your divine generosity astounds us and calls into question our values and our selfishness.

Open our eyes to see beyond our own needs, and unclench our hands to share what we have with those in need.

This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

***EXPERIENCING GOD'S GRACE – THE GOOD NEWS**

We are enabled to live our lives in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ because of the generous love of God for 'if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.'

Thanks be to God!

***OPENING SONG**

“Earth and All Stars!”

vss. 1-4 # 558

*Earth and all stars! Loud rushing planets!
Sing to the Lord a new song!
Oh, victory! Loud shouting army!
Sing to the Lord a new song!*

*Refrain He has done marvelous things.
I too will praise him with a new song!*

*Hail, wind, and rain! Loud blowing snowstorm!
Sing to the Lord a new song!
Flowers and trees! Loud rustling dry leaves!
Sing to the Lord a new song! Refrain*

*Trumpet and pipes! Loud clashing cymbals!
Sing to the Lord a new song!
Harp, lute, and lyre! Loud humming cellos!
Sing to the Lord a new song! Refrain*

*Engines and steel! Loud pounding hammers!
Sing to the Lord a new song!
Limestone and beams! Loud building workers!
Sing to the Lord a new song! Refrain*

Text: Herbert F. Brokering, b. 1926

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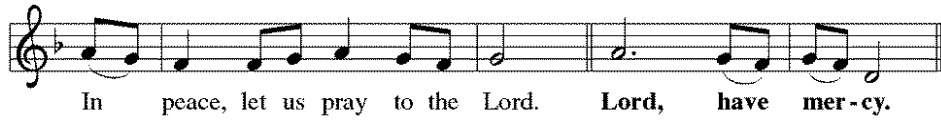
***APOSTOLIC GREETING**

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

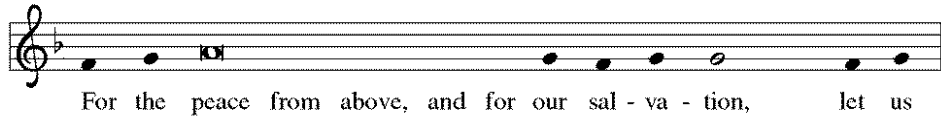
And also with you.

***SHARING THE PEACE**

***KYRIE**



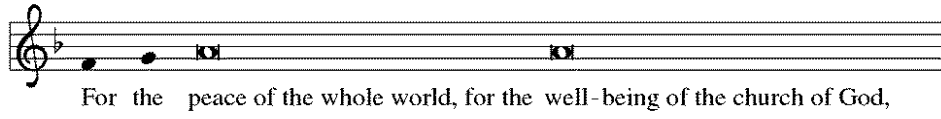
In peace, let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer-cy.



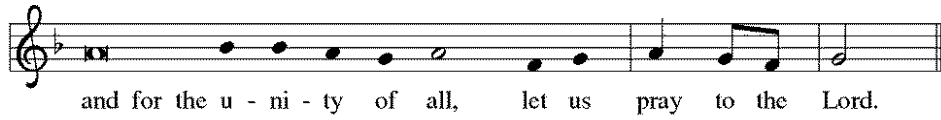
For the peace from above, and for our sal-va-tion, let us



pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer-cy.



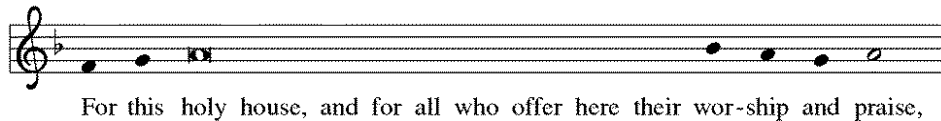
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



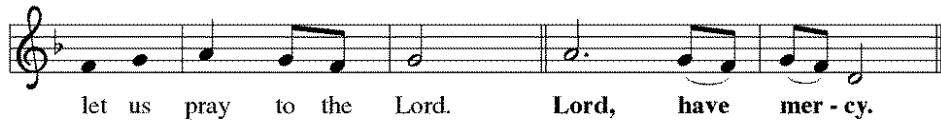
and for the u-ni-ty of all, let us pray to the Lord.



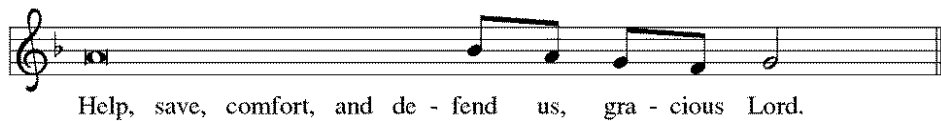
Lord, have mer-cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer-cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de-fend us, gra-cious Lord.

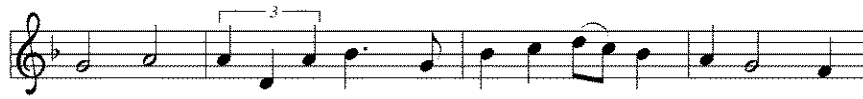


A - men.

***CANTICLE OF PRAISE** “Glory to God...”



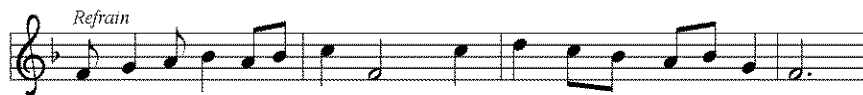
Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.



1 Lord God, heav-en - ly King, al - might-y God and Fa - ther, we



wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo-ry.



Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.



2 Lord Je - sus Christ, on-ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of



God, you take a-way the sin of the world: have mer-cy on us; you are



seat-ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.



Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.



3 For you a-lone are the Ho-ly One, you a-lone are the Lord,



you a-lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly



Spir-it, in the glo-ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.



Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray.

Almighty and eternal God, you show perpetual lovingkindness to us your servants. Because we cannot rely on our own abilities, grant us your merciful judgment, and train us to embody the generosity of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

✠ WORD ✠

God speaks to us in scripture, reading, preaching, and song

Matthew narrates one of Jesus' controversial parables in which Jesus says that the reign of God is like that of a landowner who pays his workers the same wage no matter what time of day they began to work. When God changes God's mind about punishing Nineveh for their evil ways, Jonah is angry. Yet God is gracious and merciful, abounding in steadfast love. In baptism we receive the grace of God that is freely given to all. As Martin Luther wrote, in the presence of God's mercy we are all beggars.

SCRIPTURE READING

Jonah 3:10--4:11

After Jonah's short sermon in 3:4, the Ninevites all repented and God decided to spare the city. Jonah objected to this and became even more angry when God ordered a worm to destroy a plant that was providing shade. The book ends with a question that challenges any who are not ready to forgive: You, Jonah, are all worked up about a bush, but shouldn't I be concerned about a hundred and twenty thousand Ninevites?

¹⁰When God saw what [the people of Nineveh] did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.

^{4:1}But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. ²He prayed to the LORD and said, "O LORD! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing. ³And now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live." ⁴And the LORD said, "Is it right for you to be angry?" ⁵Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city, and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city.

⁶The LORD God appointed a bush, and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort; so Jonah was very happy about the bush. ⁷But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. ⁸When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, "It is better for me to die than to live."

⁹But God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?" And he said, "Yes, angry enough to die." ¹⁰Then the LORD said, "You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. ¹¹And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also many animals?"

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

SCRIPTURE READING

Philippians 1:21-30

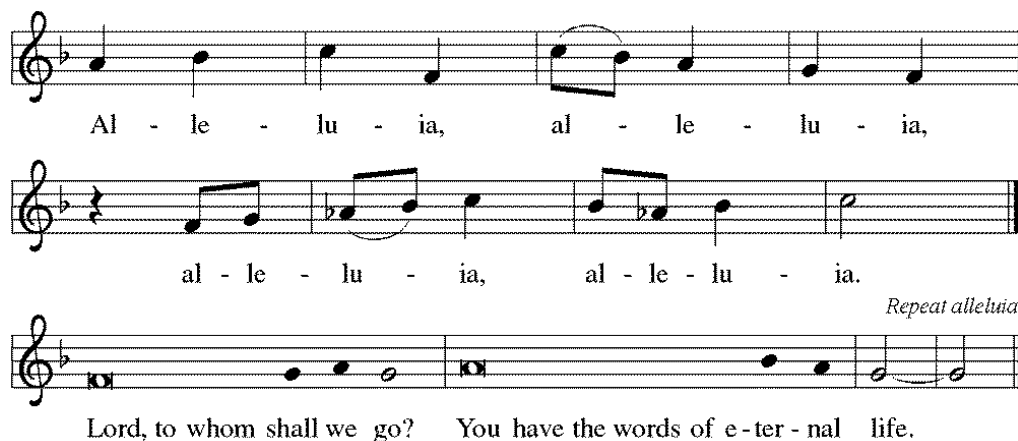
Paul writes to the Philippians from prison. Though he is uncertain about the outcome of his imprisonment, he is committed to the ministry of the gospel and calls on the Philippians to live lives that reflect and enhance the gospel mission.

²¹For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. ²²If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which I prefer. ²³I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; ²⁴but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. ²⁵Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, ²⁶so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again.

²⁷Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, ²⁸and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. ²⁹For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well—³⁰since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,
al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. *Repeat alleluia*
Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life.

*GOSPEL READING

Matthew 20:1-16

Jesus tells a parable about God's generosity, challenging the common assumption that God rewards people according to what they have earned or deserve.

The holy gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹“The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ²After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. ³When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; ⁴and he said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.’ So they went. ⁵When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. ⁶And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, ‘Why are you standing here idle all day?’ ⁷They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard.’ ⁸When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, ‘Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.’ ⁹When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. ¹⁰Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. ¹¹And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ¹²saying, ‘These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’ ¹³But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage?’ ¹⁴Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. ¹⁵Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?’ ¹⁶So the last will be first, and the first will be last.”

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SERMON

Pastor Bill Peters

SONG OF THE DAY “O Master, Let Me Walk with You”

492

*O Master, let me walk with you in lowly paths of service true;
tell me your secret; help me bear the strain of toil, the fret of care.*

*Help me the slow of heart to move by some clear, winning word of love;
teach me the wayward feet to stay, and guide them in the homeward way.*

*Teach me your patience; share with me a closer, dearer company,
in work that keeps faith sweet and strong, in trust that triumphs over wrong,*

*In hope that sends a shining ray far down the future's broad'ning way,
in peace that only you can give; with you, O Master, let me live.*

Text: Washington Gladden, 1836-1918, alt.

BLESSING OF SUNDAY SCHOOL STAFF

Today we recognize and bless those who have been called to the ministry of leading, teaching and guiding.

Sara Anderson, Dawn Bodenham, Heather Buhmann, Joseph Charlson, Robin Charlson, Nicky Dagestad, Allison Greenfield, Tina Henely, Lindsay Langfald, Sandy Lindflott, Harlan Nyhus, Heidi Nyhus, Callie Schmidt, Kristin Schmidt, Casey Singelstad, Chantel Storby

The Apostle Paul tells us:

“It is Jesus whom we proclaim, teaching everyone in all wisdom so that we may present everyone mature in Christ. For this I toil and struggle with all the energy that he powerfully inspires within me”
Colossians 1:28-29

(To the teachers)

Do you accept the responsibility to use your gifts to teach the Word of God, to nurture faith and to model a Christian lifestyle?

Teachers: I accept this responsibility and ask God to help and guide me.

(To the parents)

God has entrusted you to the care and nurture of these children. Do you promise to create a Christian environment in your home an environment marked with prayer, praise and Christian practices? Do you promise to continue your support and involvement in your child’s faith development in this congregation in partnership with teachers and other staff?

Parents: We do, and ask God to help and guide us.

(To the learners)

You have heard the promises made by teachers and parents regarding your faith nurture. Do you promise to come to Sunday school and other learning opportunities to learn and grow with others?

Learners: We do, and ask God to help and guide us.

(To the congregation)

It is our privilege to affirm and support those who are engage in the teaching ministry of this congregation and of God’s kingdom in this place. Will you commit to support them through prayer, encouragement, friendship and participation in education, worship, and service?

Congregation: We will, and ask God to help and guide us.

Let us pray. Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon all those who teach and learn. Increase our faithful prayer, study, worship and service, and help us to live and grow in your abundant love and grace. Stir us to a deeper longing for you in our lives that we may boldly bear witness to your Word in all the world.

Amen.

***APOSTLES’ CREED**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

***PRAYERS OF THE COMMUNITY**

Remembering the caring and generous works of God, we pray for the church, creation, and the needs of our neighbors.

...Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

***LORD'S PRAYER**

✠ **THANKSGIVING** ✠

God invites us to respond to His grace

OFFERING

***OFFERTORY SONG** *"Create in Me..."* **ELW # 186**

*Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and uphold me with your free Spirit.*

✠ **SENDING** ✠

God blesses us and sends us in mission in the world

***BLESSING**

***THREE-FOLD AMEN**

***RINGING OF THE BELL**

***SENDING SONG** *"My Faith Looks Up to Thee"*

479

*My faith looks up to thee, thou Lamb of Calvary,
Savior divine! Now hear me while I pray,
take all my guilt away, oh, let me from this day
be wholly thine!*

*May thy rich grace impart strength to my fainting heart,
my zeal inspire; as thou hast died for me,
oh, may my love to thee pure, warm, and changeless be,
a living fire!*

*While life's dark maze I tread and griefs around me spread,
be thou my guide; bid darkness turn to day,
wipe sorrow's tears away, nor let me ever stray
from thee aside.*

*When ends life's transient dream, when death's cold, sullen stream
shall o'er me roll; blest Savior, then, in love
fear and distrust remove; oh, bear me safe above,
a ransomed soul!*

***DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude



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Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 24, 2023

Daily Bread for Everyone

We all have a natural sense of justice, and of what is fair. We might easily conflate the two, but justice and fairness don't always lead to the same end. Jesus' parable of the landowner and the workers suggests that God's sense of justice might not seem fair to everyone. Our ideas of what is right are likely upended by the landowner's generosity. He gives to each worker not what they have earned but rather the "daily bread" they need.

Sometimes in the church's ministry, we behave in a spirit exactly opposite that of the parable's landowner, opting to be "fair" above all else. So, for example, the food pantry can insist on the same items in the same amount for everyone, or the soup kitchen rules dictate that everyone get the same thing on their tray. Yet everyone doesn't always have the same needs. What if instead of fairness, we also made a way for generosity to sometimes disrupt the rules? There are good reasons for insisting on fairness. Rules establish helpful boundaries. Fairness can help ensure that when resources are scarce, everyone has a chance to receive something. Yet, in the name of fairness, we can also overlook both God's abundant generosity and the actual needs of others.

Maybe Jesus' parable doesn't mean changing the rules altogether. But maybe it means leaving ample space for those situations in which emulating God's generosity means bending the rules. God's grace frees us from a stubborn insistence on "only what's fair" so that we can care for others with generous spirits. No matter when we come to the baptismal waters, God's word of grace is enough to cover our sins. No matter our circumstances when we are gathered at Christ's table, God's generosity means there is always enough for each and every one of us to receive the daily bread we need.