



At his gate lay
a poor man
named Lazarus

LUKE 16:20

Sunday, September 25, 2022

The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Consideration of and care for those in need (especially those “at our gate,” visible to us, of whom we are aware) is an essential component of good stewardship. It is in the sharing of wealth that we avoid the snare of wealth. It is the one whom death could not hold—who comes to us risen from the dead—who can free us from the death grip of greed.

GATHERING

WELCOME

This is the day the Lord has made.
We will rejoice and be glad in it.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, who is eager to forgive and who loves us beyond our days.
Amen.

Dear friends, together let us acknowledge our failure to love this world as Jesus does.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God of mercy and forgiveness,

we confess that sin still has a hold on us. We have harmed your good creation. We have failed to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with you. Turn us in a new direction. Show us the path that leads to life. Be our refuge and strength on the journey, through Jesus Christ, our redeemer and friend. Amen.

Beloved of God: your sins are forgiven + and you are made whole. God points the way to new life in Christ, who meets us on the road. Journey now in God's abiding love through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God,

rich in mercy, you look with compassion on this troubled world. Feed us with your grace, and grant us the treasure that comes only from you, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

WORD

Reading: 1 Timothy 6:6-19

Timothy is reminded of the confession he made at his baptism and of its implications for daily life. His priorities will be different from those of people who merely want to be rich.

⁶Of course, there is great gain in godliness combined with contentment; ⁷for we brought nothing into the world, so that we can take nothing out of it; ⁸but if we have food and clothing, we will be content with these. ⁹But those who want to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains.

¹¹But as for you, man of God, shun all this; pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness. ¹²Fight the good fight of the faith; take hold of the eternal life, to which you were called and for which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. ¹³In the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you ¹⁴to keep the commandment without spot or blame until the manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵which he will bring about at the right time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords. ¹⁶It is he alone who has immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see; to him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.

¹⁷As for those who in the present age are rich, command them not to be haughty, or to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but rather on God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. ¹⁸They are to do good, to be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share, ¹⁹thus storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of the life that really is life.

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel: Luke 16:19-31

Jesus tells a parable in which the poor one is “lifted up” and the rich one is “sent away empty.” Jesus makes it clear that this ethic of merciful reversal is not new but is as old as Moses and the prophets.

Jesus said:] ¹⁹“There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. ²⁰And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, ²¹who longed to satisfy his hunger with what fell from the rich man's table; even the dogs would come and lick his sores. ²²The poor man died and was carried away by the angels to be with Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³In Hades, where he was being tormented, he looked up and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus by his side. ²⁴He called out, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in agony in these flames.’ ²⁵But Abraham said, ‘Child, remember that during your lifetime you received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in agony. ²⁶Besides all this, between you and us a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who might want to pass from here to you cannot do so, and no one can cross from there to us.’ ²⁷He said, ‘Then, father, I beg you to send him to my father's house—²⁸for I have five brothers—that he may warn them, so that they will not also

come into this place of torment.’²⁹ Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the prophets; they should listen to them.’³⁰ He said, ‘No, father Abraham; but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’³¹ He said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

GOSPEL MESSAGE

Optical Illusions

Have you ever seen one of those pictures that changes depending on how you look at it? Is it a rabbit or a duck? Is it a vase or two faces looking at one another? A young woman or an old one? Sometimes our first impression of something gets in the way of us seeing it another way.

In the parable Jesus tells today, there is a man with wealth and influence who has always seen his life as a success. That success seems all the more pronounced in contrast to a poor, sick beggar who is always hanging around the entrance to his house. But when the rich man dies, he realizes that his life was actually the opposite of what he thought. It was not his possessions or status that mattered; it was the justice and love he showed to others. When it came to those things, he was far more impoverished and much sicker than the man he looked down on every day.

When we look at our own lives, it can be easy to get stuck in just one way of seeing them. If we focus on worldly standards, we may judge ourselves as successes or failures in ways that are out of touch with how God sees us. With this parable, Jesus calls us to new ways of looking at ourselves. Where are we missing the opportunities right outside our front door to act with love and justice for our siblings near and far?

In Christian worship, we gather to practice the way our lives and our world appear to God. We lift up the cries that have gone unheard. We look at one another and ourselves through the redemptive waters of baptism. We feed one another around the table that Christ sets for us all in our common need. As witnesses to God’s truth, we send one another forth to shatter misguided illusions in the world around us.

Let us confess our faith in the words of the

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 power of 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 INTERCESSION

As scattered grains of wheat are gathered together into one bread, so let us gather our prayers for the church, those in need, and all of God's good creation.

A brief silence.

O God, rich in mercy, fill your church with righteousness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness. Empower the baptized by your Spirit to be rich in good works and ready to share. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Protect the earth and its creatures. Provide water, food, shelter, and favorable habitats, especially for endangered species. Preserve threatened ice caps, glaciers, parks, and beaches. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Increase justice in nations, local governments, and courtrooms. Guide lawyers and those who hold public office to act with compassion and discernment (*local authorities may be named*). God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Give food to the hungry. Set the captives free. Lift up those who are bowed down. Watch over the stranger. Tend to those who are ill (*especially*). Stir us to act in the best interest of our neighbors. God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Enliven our praise. Inspire musicians, artists, poets, and all who create beauty in this place (*those who plan and lead worship may be named*). God of grace,
hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Accept our thanksgiving for the people you surround us with, especially for those who celebrate their lives and birth this week:

Lois Lawson

Stevie Lamar

Debra Muller

Deb Olson

enrich them with a sense of joy and grace for yet another year. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Save us from ourselves, from racism in all its hidden forms, from hollow words without actions, forgive us, renew us, call us to action God of grace,

hear our prayer.

For those fighting cancer and other serious illnesses, grant strength and grace. We pray for doctors, nurses, technicians, researchers and all who work toward treatments and cures. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

For police officers and firefighters, for peacekeepers and military personnel, and for the leaders of governments, that they provide protection to all people, especially the most vulnerable. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

For all those who are dealing with the COVID-19 coronavirus around the world. Thankful for the vaccine, we ask your help in the continued management of the disease throughout the world. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

For the people of Ukraine, grant continued protection, strength and hope for a better tomorrow. Bring peace and an end to the war. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Enfold the saints who have died in the arms of your loving care. Grant that the holy angels accompany us and bring us to eternal life with them in the light of your presence. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Gathered together in the sweet communion of the Holy Spirit, gracious God, we offer these and all our prayers to you; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

OFFERING

Thank you for your support of our ministry.

BLESSING

May the Lord bless you and keep you,
may the Lord smile upon you and be gracious to you,
may the Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace. + Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, with Christ beside you.

Thanks be to God.

ADDITIONAL READINGS FOR THE DAY

Amos 6:1a, 4-7

Psalm 146

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS FOR

October 2, 2022

Seventeenth Sunday After Pentecost

Habakkuk 1:1-4; 2:1-4

Wicked surround the righteous; wait for the LORD

Psalm 37:1-9

Commit your way to the LORD; put your trust in the LORD. (Ps. 37:5)

2 Timothy 1:1-14

Guard the treasure entrusted to you: faith and love in Christ

Luke 17:5-10

Faith the size of a mustard seed

Upcoming Commemorations

Michael and All Angels

Thursday, September 29, 2022

Michael the archangel, captain of the heavenly hosts, is remembered on this day along with the other angels and archangels. The word "angel" means messenger, and in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, these beings have a fully spiritual nature and no physical body.

Jerome, translator, teacher, died 420

Friday, September 30, 2022

Jerome was a biblical scholar and translator, but rather than translating the original Hebrew and Greek scriptures into classical Latin, he worked in the commonly-spoken Latin of the day, creating a version called the Vulgate.

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