



***Be dressed for action
and have your lamps lit***

LUKE 12:35

Sunday, August 7, 2022

The Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

Jesus says, “It is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” It is God’s promise from the beginning—to Abraham, to the early church, and to the “little flock” of which we are a part in today’s assembly. Faith, God’s baptismal gift, trusts the promises of God. Have no fear.

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, whose steadfast love endures forever.
Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Merciful God,

we confess that we have not followed your path but have chosen our own way. Instead of putting others before ourselves, we long to take the best seats at the table. When met by those in need, we have too often passed by on the other side. Set us again on the path of life. Save us from ourselves and free us to love our neighbors. Amen.

Hear the good news! God does not deal with us according to our sins but delights in granting pardon and mercy. In the name of + Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. You are free to love as God loves.

Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God,

you sent your Holy Spirit to be the life and light of your church. Open our hearts to the riches of your grace, that we may be ready to receive you wherever you appear, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

WORD

Reading: Genesis 15:1-6

God promises childless and aging Abram that a child of his own will be his heir and that his descendants will number as many as the stars. Abram trusts God's promise, and through this faith he is considered righteous.

¹After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, "Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." ²But Abram said, "O Lord GOD, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" ³And Abram said, "You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir." ⁴But the word of the LORD came to him, "This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir." ⁵He brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your descendants be." ⁶And he believed the LORD; and the LORD reckoned it to him as righteousness.

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel: Luke 12:32-40

Jesus encourages disciples to invest their hearts and live fully into God's reign. Instead of facing life with fear, those who know God's generosity are always ready to receive from God and to give to others.

[Jesus said:] ³²"Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. ³³Sell your possessions, and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. ³⁴For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

³⁵"Be dressed for action and have your lamps lit; ³⁶be like those who are waiting for their master to return from the wedding banquet, so that they may open the door for him as soon as he comes and knocks. ³⁷Blessed are those slaves whom the master finds alert when he comes; truly I tell you, he will fasten his belt and have them sit down to eat, and he will come and serve them. ³⁸If he comes during the middle of the night, or near dawn, and finds them so, blessed are those slaves.

³⁹"But know this: if the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. ⁴⁰You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

GOSPEL MESSAGE

Security Systems That Don't Fail

Jesus knows that we worry about a lot of things. Many people who own a lot of possessions live in fear of losing them. Some find that a security system installed with cameras and sensors and smart doorbells can lower their anxiety. But even with internet-of-things technology, these security systems do not stop the risk of theft. We may get a video of someone stealing our stuff, but we still lose the stuff. Anxiety over losing what we have persists and may in fact be ever-present as our cell phones alert us to each passerby at the front door.

Jesus proposes several other security systems that transform our anxiety over losing what we have into a different kind of calm. The first one he offers is probably the least popular: *Sell your possessions and give the money to the poor.* You don't have to worry about your belongings being stolen if you get rid of them. It's a radical option, but an option nonetheless.

Jesus also proposes another kind of security: *Place value in the things that can't be stolen.* When we treasure the mercy and love of God as our most prized possession, we have what no one else can take. We have a security system that does not fail. We have deep and abiding peace. Our fears are calmed.

There is one additional security system to which Jesus invites us: *Have confidence that it is God's good pleasure to give us life with God,* life in a world where everyone has enough and no one worries about losing it, life where we all know we are equally beloved. When this is our treasure, when it is where we place our hearts, we find the peace that is a secure gift.

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

Trusting in God's extraordinary love, let us come near to the Holy One in prayer.

A brief silence.

Let your lovingkindness be upon your church. Fill all who proclaim the gospel with your Spirit. Equip your flock to speak your word of promise and hope in the midst of fear and uncertainty. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Let your lovingkindness be upon your creation. Dwell among us and sustain our earthly home. In places of famine, provide nourishment. In places of plenty, fashion us to be good stewards of your bounty. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Let your lovingkindness be upon your world. Be our helper and our shield in places torn by strife and violence. Raise up courageous leaders to govern with compassion and justice. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Let your lovingkindness be upon your children. Look upon all who wait for your steadfast love. Console those who grieve and embrace those who cry out to you. Help us to trust your promise and not be afraid. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Let your lovingkindness be upon this community. Fashion our hearts to strive for the way of peace. Strengthen the outreach ministries of this congregation (*specific ministries may be named*) and all who care for those in need. Merciful God,
receive 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:

Glenda Heist

Dick Muller

Harvey Klitzke

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

receive 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 Merciful God,

receive 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. Merciful God,

receive 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. Merciful God,

receive 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. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

For the people of Ukraine, grant protection as you lead them from war to peace. Guide leaders with your wisdom and turn their minds and hearts to what is possible, renewed peace in the future. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

With thanksgiving we remember all who have died in faith and now rest in you. As they placed their hope in you, so strengthen us to trust in your promise of new life. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Receive the prayers of your children, merciful God, and hold us forever in your steadfast love; through Jesus Christ, our holy Wisdom.

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. Love your neighbor.

Thanks be to God.

ADDITIONAL READINGS FOR THE DAY

Psalm 33:12-22
Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS FOR

August 14, 2022

Tenth Sunday After Pentecost

Jeremiah 23:23-29

God's word is like fire, like a hammer that breaks rocks

Psalm 82

Arise, O God, and rule the earth. (Ps. 82:8)

Hebrews 11:29-12:2

The faith of the Hebrew people, a great cloud of witnesses

Luke 12:49-56

Jesus brings fire on earth and has a baptism with which to be baptized

Upcoming Commemorations

Dominic, founder of the Order of Preachers (Dominicans), died 1221

Monday, August 8, 2022

Dominic was a Spanish priest who saw the wealth of the clergy as a stumbling block for the church, so he formed a movement, the Order of Preachers (commonly called Dominicans) devoted to itinerant preaching and living in poverty.

Lawrence, deacon, martyr, died 258

Wednesday, August 10, 2022

As one of the seven deacons of the church at Rome, Lawrence was responsible for the church's financial matters and for the care of the poor. Asked by the emperor to gather the church's treasure, he presented a collection of orphans, lepers, and the like. The enraged emperor had him put to death.

Clare, Abbess of San Damiano, died 1253

Thursday, August 11, 2022

A contemporary of Francis of Assisi, Clare and a growing number of companions established a women's Franciscan community, called the Order of Poor Ladies, or Poor Clares. She inspired other women to pursue spiritual goals.

Florence Nightingale, died 1910; Clara Maass, died 1901; renewers of society

Saturday, August 13, 2022

Nightingale was born in England, and horrified her wealthy family by deciding to become a nurse. She led a group of nurses in ministering in the midst of the Crimean War, and worked for hospital reform. Maass, a native of New Jersey, was also a war nurse, and volunteered as a subject for research on yellow fever. She died of the disease.

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