



Sunday, September 13, 2020

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost, Year A

Introduction

In today's second reading Paul questions why we judge one another, since we all stand before the judgment of God. Yet we do sin against one another, and Jesus' challenge that we forgive seventy-seven times reveals God's boundless mercy. When we hear the words of forgiveness in worship and sign ourselves with the cross, we are renewed in baptism to be signs of reconciliation in the world.

PRELUDE Margaret Seba

WELCOME

This is the day the Lord has made.

We will rejoice and be glad in it.

OPENING SONG ELW 834 vs. 1, 4 Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

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.

Silence is kept for reflection.

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.

SPECIAL MUSIC

Reading: Genesis 50:15-21

After Jacob's death the brothers of Joseph begged for forgiveness for the crime they had done against him. You intended to do me harm, Joseph said, but God used this as an opportunity to do good and save many lives.

15Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" 16So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, 17'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. 18Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." 19But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? 20Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. 21So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel: Matthew 18:21-35

When Peter asks about the limits of forgiveness, Jesus responds with a parable that suggests human forgiveness should mirror the unlimited mercy of God.

21Peter 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?" 22Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

23"For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. 24When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; 25and, 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. 26So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' 27And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. 28But 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.' 29Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' 30But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. 31When his fellow slaves saw what had happened,

they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³²Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ ³⁴And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Music: Jesus Loves Me - recorded

CHILDREN’S SERMON

Music: Lord, Listen to your Children Praying - recorded

SERMON

SONG OF THE DAY ELW 359 vs. 1, 5 Where Charity and Love Prevail

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

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

A brief silence.

You welcome us when we are weak in faith. Uphold your church throughout the world; make it a place of welcome. Strengthen faith through Bible studies and Sunday schools, confirmation classes and youth ministries. Nurture new ministries of education and growth. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

The heights of the heavens show us the vastness of your steadfast love. Have compassion on your creation. Where human selfishness has brought ruin and destruction, we look to you to heal, renew, and redeem your world. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Make your ways known to the nations. Speak kindness to our bitter grudges. Settle our hearts when we want to settle accounts with violence. Bless our leaders with patience and wisdom. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Bring healing and justice wherever harm is dealt. Provide vindication for all who are oppressed. Free victims of human trafficking and forced labor; deliver all who are bound by debt. Feed all who hunger, and guard refugees fleeing famine, poverty, and war. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Teach us to forgive. Remind us that you do not always accuse us. Still our tongues when we are tempted to pass judgment and argue over opinions. Make this congregation a community of mercy for one another and for all our neighbors. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

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

9/15 – Deb Dakken

9/19 – Kristi Tostenrud

enrich them with a sense of your joy and grace for yet another year. Lord, in your mercy, **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. Grant wisdom, give us courage for the coming days. Lord, in your mercy, **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. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For those we know and love who serve in our military and their families. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For the protection of firefighters and police officers, for our President, and all our elected officials, national, state and local leaders, that through their wisdom, insight and patience, peace and justice prevail throughout the world. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For all those who are dealing with the COVID-19 coronavirus around the world: those who are infected, those caring for them, those trying to mitigate and manage the epidemic, and those who are living in fear of it. May God bless us all with healing and hope. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

As fires burn uncontrollably in California and other states, we lean into your presence and care. We are mindful of those who have suffered injury, damage or loss and ask that you would strengthen and comfort those involved. Protect the firefighters, rescue workers, responders, and emergency care providers with all that is needful for the tasks ahead. Guard those who yet remain in harm's way. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Whether we live or whether we die, we are yours. We thank you for those who have showed us faithfulness, for the knees that taught us how to bow to you and the tongues that taught us to praise you (*especially John Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople, whom we commemorate today*). Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

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

Amen.

OFFERING

The Offering will be collected in the narthex, on the table outside the sanctuary doors. Thank you for your support of our ministry.

THE LORD'S SUPPER

Words of Institution

Grace at the table: The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen**

COMMUNION

Communion will be in a continuous fashion. Please, follow the ushers direction. As you move down the aisles, please remain 6 feet in distance from those not in your household.

COMMUNION BLESSING

BLESSING

SENDING SONG ELW 665 vs.1, 4 Rise, Shine, You People!

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share the good news.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

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