

SEPTEMBER 13, 2020

WELCOMING WORD: Jesus reminds us of God's boundless mercy, and challenges us to forgive not seven times, but seventy-seven times. When you hear the words of forgiveness in worship, remind yourself of God's promise to forgive you!

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

C: He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities.

L: For as the heavens are high above the earth,

C: so great is his steadfast love towards those who fear him;

L: as far as the east is from the west,

C: so far he removes our transgressions from us

L: As a father has compassion for his children,

C: so the Lord has compassion for those who fear him.

OPENING HYMN # 730 *My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness*

My soul proclaims your greatness, Lord; I sing my Savior's praise!

You looked upon my lowliness, and I am full of grace.

Now ev'ry land and ev'ry age this blessing shall proclaim—

Great wonders you have done for me, and holy is your name.

To all who live in holy fear your mercy ever flows.

With mighty arm you dash the proud, their scheming hearts expose.

The ruthless you have cast aside, the lowly throned instead;

The hungry filled with all good things, the rich sent off unfed.

To Israel, your servant blest, your help is ever sure;

the promise to our parents made their children will secure.

Sing glory to the Holy One, give honor to the Word,

And praise the Pow'r of the Most High, one God, by all adored.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, whose steadfast love is everlasting, whose faithfulness endures from generation to generation. Trusting in the mercy of God, let us confess our sin,

Pause for silence and reflection.

P: Reconciling God,

C: We confess that we do not trust your abundance, and we deny your presence in our lives. We place our hope in ourselves and rely on our own efforts. We fail to believe that you provide enough for all. We abuse your creation for our own benefit. We fear difference and do not welcome others as you have welcomed us. We sin in thought, word, and deed. By your grace, forgive us: through your love, renew us; and in your Spirit, lead us; so that we may live and serve you in newness of life. Amen.

P: Beloved of God, by the abundance of divine mercy we have peace with God through Christ Jesus, through whom we have obtained grace upon grace. Our sins are forgiven. Let us live now in hope. For hope does not disappoint, because God's love has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit. Amen.

INVOCATION

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

C: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: O Lord God,

C: merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

FIRST LESSON: Genesis 50:15-21 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.

SECOND LESSON: Romans 14:1-12 ¹Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. ²Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. ⁴Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand. ⁵Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. ⁶Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God. ⁷We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. ¹⁰Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgement seat of God. ¹¹For it is written, 'As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God.' ¹²So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

GOSPEL: Matthew 18:21-35 ²¹Then Peter came and said to him, "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."

MESSAGE – Pastor John Twiton

HYMN # 739 *In All Our Grief*

In all our grief and fear we turn to you.
O God, you know all that we think or do,
You know the pain we put each other through.

Refrain: Lord, have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord, grant us peace.

Help us to put aside the angry word,
The clenching fist, the wish and will to hurt.
Teach us the way in which love best is served. *Refrain*

You did not even spare your only son.
He lived our griefs and bore all evil done,
but through his cross, redemption has been won. *Refrain*

God, when we suffer all that we can bear,
then let us know that you in truth are near
and will not leave us lost in all our fear. *Refrain*

CONFESSION OF FAITH

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day, he rose again. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again 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

BENVOLENCE FOR SEPTEMBER - SABA INTERNATIONAL

OFFERTORY PRAYER Of all the gifts which you have given us, we treasure your Holy Spirit, O God. In gratitude for guidance and discernment, we offer these tributes before you and ask your blessing. May our lives be a blessing to others, in Jesus' name. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

L: Let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence

L: 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, no matter what methods we need to use to gather. Nurture new ministries of fellowship and growth, Lord in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: Protect your creation, O God. Teach us ways that do not harm what you have entrusted to our care. Renew and enliven places suffering from drought, fires, floods, storms, or pollution. Lord, in your mercy.

C: Hear our prayer.

L: 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,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: 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 land with your patience and wisdom. Lord, in your mercy.

C: Hear our prayer.

L: 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.

C: Hear our prayer.

L: Send your healing spirit to all those afflicted by illness or injury. Sustain those who help to care for those in need. We pray for our friends and neighbors who need your strength (especially . . .) Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: In the certain hope that nothing can separate us from your love, we offer these prayers to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen

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. 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.

BENEDICTION *May the blessing of God our creator, the love of Jesus Christ our redeemer, and the presence of the Holy Spirit the comforter, surround you and sustain you until we gather again*

CLOSING HYMN: #551 Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee

Joyful, joyful we adore thee, God of glory, Lord of love!
Hearts unfold like flow'rs before thee, Praising thee, their sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness, Drive the gloom of doubt away.
Giver of immortal gladness, Fill us with the light of day.

All thy works with joy surround thee, Earth and heav'n reflect thy rays,
Stars and angels sing around thee, Center of unbroken praise.
Field and forest, vale and mountain, Flow'ry meadow, flashing sea,
Chanting bird, and flowing fountain Call us to rejoice in thee.

Thou art giving and forgiving, Ever blessing, ever blest,
Wellspring of the joy of living, Ocean-depth of happy rest!
Thou our Father, Christ our brother, All who live in love are thine;
Teach us how to love each other, Lift us to the joy divine!

PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS:

Agnes Robertson (friend of Holly Thompson)
Nick Sydow (friend of Connie Curran's sons)
Delores Bryant
Brock Howe
Dorothy Jelle
Mike Olson (Wendy Rasmussen's brother)
Connie Fausett (sister of Diane Twiton & Jean Bower)
Sally Gaard (friend of Margie Kahl)
Harlan Oimoen
Grace Aavang
Trevor Sayre (son of Tamie Reichert)
Dianne Haskins (friend of Char Smith)

Makenzee Smith
Brian Marshall (friend of Kim Kelliher)
Martha Hartman
Jeannie U'Ren
Ruth Ann Nemet
Irene Bruflat
Laurie Duden (Brenda Martin's aunt)
Bill Steinhauer
Peter Toniazzo
Richard Schuhler (friend of Ron & Bonny Kellogg)
Julie Joles and her daughter and granddaughter



DEVOTIONS FOR THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 13, 2020

SHARE: What was a high point of your day? What was a low point?

READ: Read the following daily readings to deepen your understanding

Monday, John 3:13-17,
Tuesday, Romans 14:13-15:2,
Wednesday, Genesis 50:22-26,
Thursday, Psalm 145:1-8,
Friday, 2 Corinthians 13:5-10,
Saturday, Zephaniah 2:13-15

TALK: Consider some of these ideas: "21Then Peter came and said to him, "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" -- Matthew 18:21 When Peter asks about the limits of forgiveness, Jesus responds with a parable that suggest human forgiveness should mirror the unlimited mercy of God.

- How often have you felt 'at the end of your rope' with someone else's actions?
- Can you still find a way to forgive multiple times?
- How often have you needed forgiveness from others?
- How often has God needed to forgive you? Does God ever tire of forgiving you?

PRAY: O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

BLESS: May you remember how God's forgiveness has set you free. Amen!