

SEPTEMBER 27, 2020

WELCOMING WORD *Jesus' parable about two sons who don't do what they say reveals surprises in the reign of God. In the reading from Ezekiel the people claim the ways of the Lord are unfair, while God offers repentance and new life. Paul urges us to look to Christ as a model of humility, putting the interests of others above our own.*

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Show me your ways, O LORD, and teach me your paths.

C: **Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all the day long.**

L: Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love, for they are from everlasting.

C: **Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions; remember me according to your steadfast love and for the sake of your goodness, O LORD.**

OPENING HYMN # 250 *Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty* (vs. 1-3)

Open now thy gates of beauty, Zion, let me enter there,
Where my soul in joyful duty waits for God who answers prayer.
Oh, how blessed is this place, filled with solace, light and grace!

Gracious God, I come before thee; come thou also unto me,
Where we find thee and adore thee, there a heav'n on earth must be.
To my heart, oh, enter thou; let it be thy temple now!

Here thy praise is gladly chanted; here thy seed is duly sown.
Let my soul, where it is planted, bring forth precious sheaves alone,
So that all I hear may be fruitful unto life in me.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, who creates, redeems, and sustains us and all of creation. Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Pause for silence and reflection.

P: Faithful God,

C: **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.**

P: 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.

C: **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: God of love, giver of life,

C: **you know our frailties and failings. Give us your grace to overcome them, keep us from those things that harm us, and guide us in the way of salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

FIRST LESSON: Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32¹The word of the LORD came to me: ²What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, “The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge?” ³As I live, says the Lord GOD, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. ⁴Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins that shall die.

²⁵Yet you say, “The way of the Lord is unfair.” Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? ²⁶When the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed they shall die. ²⁷Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. ²⁸Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. ²⁹Yet the house of Israel says, “The way of the Lord is unfair.” O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair?

³⁰Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord GOD. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin. ³¹Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? ³²For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord GOD. Turn, then, and live.

SECOND LESSON: Philippians 2:1-13 ¹If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, ²make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. ⁴Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. ⁵Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, ⁷but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, ⁸he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross.

⁹Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

¹²Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; ¹³for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

GOSPEL: Matthew 21:23-32 ²³When [Jesus] entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, “By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?” ²⁴Jesus said to them, “I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?” And they argued with one another, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say to us, ‘Why then did you not believe him?’ ²⁶But if we say, ‘Of human origin,’ we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet.” ²⁷So they answered Jesus, “We do not know.” And he said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

²⁸“What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ ²⁹He answered, ‘I will not’; but later he changed his mind and went. ³⁰The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, ‘I go, sir’; but he did not go. ³¹Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. ³²For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.”

MESSAGE – Pastor John Twiton

HYMN # 481 *Savior, Like a Shepherd, Lead Us*

Savior, like a shepherd lead us; much we need your tender care.
In your pleasant pastures feed us, for our use your fold prepare.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, you have bought us; we are yours.

We are yours; in love befriend us. Be the guardian of our way.
Keep your flock; from sin defend us. Seek us when we go astray.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, hear us children when we pray.

You have promised to receive us, poor and sinful though we be.
You have mercy to relieve us, grace to cleanse and pow'r to free.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, early let us turn to you.

Early let us seek your favor; early let us do your will.
Blessed Lord and only Savior, with your love our spirits fill.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, you have loved us, love us still.

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

OFFERTORY PRAYER Thank you, Lord, for all you have given us, especially the gift of your Son. Help us to accept his authority, trust in him, and obey him. Teach us to live our lives in service to you. in Jesus' name. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

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

A brief silence.

P: In all the world, give your church unity. Inspire all the baptized with the mind of Christ. Where the church is powerful and where it struggles, shape us with humility and obedience so that your love may be at work in us. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: Your Son took on all of bodily life in our world, even to death. Preserve and keep your creation, O God. Mend and redeem places that are polluted and damaged, so that all of creation confesses you as Lord. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: Turn the nations toward life. Where our ways are unfair, give us new hearts and new spirits. Where sin permeates our cultures and institutions, change our minds and teach us to trust your authority. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: Our lives are yours, O God. Relieve the suffering of those who are ill in body, mind, or spirit, (*especially...*) Defend the lives and welfare of children who are abused or neglected, hungry or exploited, bullied or lonely. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: Turn this congregation away from our own interests toward the interests of others. Fill us with your compassion and sympathy. Bless ministries of care in our community; make us into signs of your mercy and justice for our neighbors. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: Thank you for those who have gone into the kingdom ahead of us—tax collectors and prostitutes, likely and unlikely, obedient and slow to learn. By their witness, teach us to confess Jesus Christ as Lord in life and in death. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: All these things and whatever else you see that we need, we entrust to your mercy; through 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: #499 Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

Come, thou fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing thy grace.
Streams of mercy, never ceasing, call for songs of loudest praise.
While the hope of endless glory fills my heart with joy and love,
Teach me ever to adore thee. May I still thy goodness prove.

Here I raise my Ebenezer; hither by thy help I'm come;
And I hope, by thy good pleasure, safely to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me when a stranger, wand'ring from the fold of God.
He to rescue me from danger, interposed his precious blood.

Oh, to grace how great a debtor, daily I'm constrained to be.
Let that grace now like a fetter bind my wand'ring heart to thee.
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it; prone to leave the God I love.
Here's my heart, oh, take and seal it; seal it for thy courts above.



PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS:

Our sympathies to the families and friends of Dorothy Rasmussen (Aunt to Diane Twiton & Jean Bower) and Martha Hartman, both of whom passed away on September 24

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)

Ruth Osterholz
Makenzee Smith
Brian Marshall (friend of Kim Kelliher)
Martha Hartman
Jeannie U'Ren
Ruth Ann Nemet
Irene Bruflat
Laurie Duden (Brenda Martin's aunt)

Harlan Oimoen
Grace Aavang
Trevor Sayre (son of Tamie Reichert)
Dianne Haskins (friend of Char Smith)

Bill Steinhauer
Peter Toniazzo
Richard Schuhler (friend of Ron & Bonny Kellogg)
Mary Krantz

DEVOTIONS FOR THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 27, 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, Psalm 28, A Prayer for Help
Tuesday, Revelation 12:7-12, Michael defeats the dragon
Wednesday, Judges 16:23-31, The death of Sampson
Thursday, Psalm 80:7-15, A plea for restoration
Friday, Philippians 2:14-18; 3:1-4a, Shining as light in the world
Saturday, Jeremiah 6:1-10, Jeremiah warns the people

TALK: Consider some of these ideas: "Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves." -- Philippians 2:2. As part of a call for harmony rather than self-seeking, Paul uses a very early Christian hymn that extols the selflessness of Christ in his obedient death on the cross. Christ's selfless perspective is to be the essential perspective we share as the foundation for Christian accord.

- How often do you see others putting the common good above self-interest?
- How often do you put the good of others above self-interest?
- Jesus name is to be honored above all. What does it mean to you that the most high would stoop to rescue you?
- How might that truth affect your decisions today?

PRAY: God of love, giver of life, you know our frailties and failings. Give us your grace to overcome them, keep us from those things that harm us, and guide us in the way of salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

BLESS: May you walk humbly with your God this week. Amen!