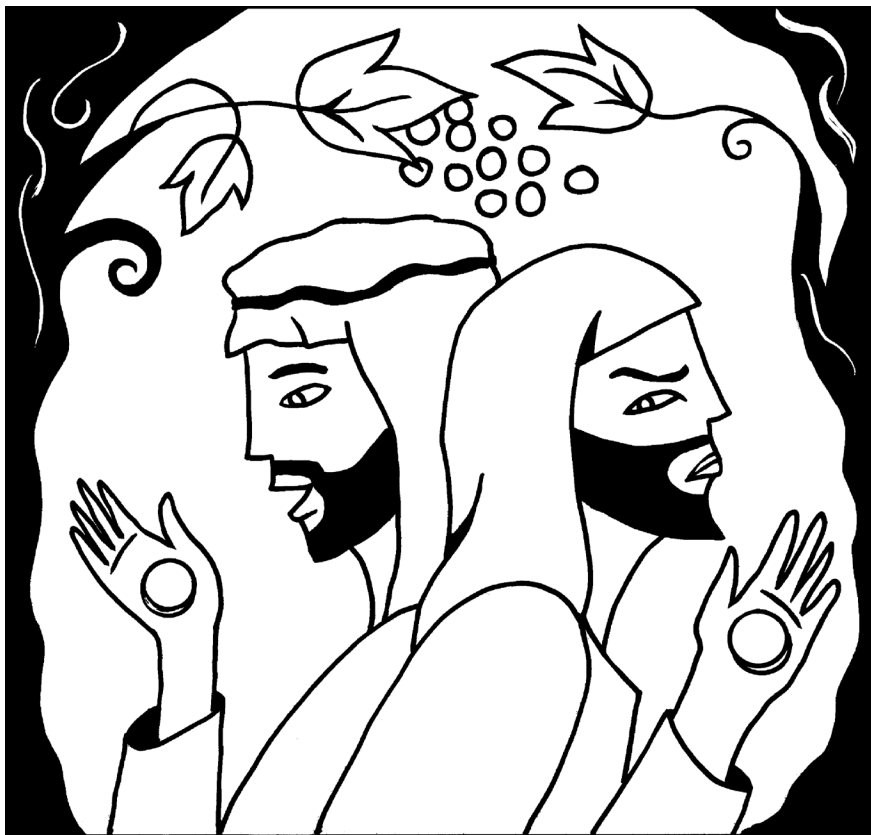


SUNDAY- SEPTEMBER 24, 2023 -9:00 AM



EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF MT. HOREB

*A family in faith, reaching out to share in God's love
with all people.*

MINISTERS
PASTOR
INTERN

ALL MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH
JOHN TWITON
ZACHARY SMIRRIS

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Sunday, September 24, 2023 | 17th Sunday after Pentecost | 9:00 AM
(+ = stand if able; L = Leader / **C** = Congregation)

PRELUDE Barb Underwood

WELCOMING WORD *Matthew narrates one of Jesus' controversial parables in which Jesus says that the reign of God is like that of a landowner who pays his workers the same wage no matter what time of day they began to work. When God changes God's mind about punishing Nineveh for their evil ways, Jonah is angry. Yet God is gracious and merciful, abounding in steadfast love. In baptism we receive the grace of God that is freely given to all. As Martin Luther wrote, in the presence of God's mercy we are all beggars.*

CONGREGATIONAL HYMN:

834 - Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P - Blessed be God, the one who forms us, Jesus who bears the cross, the Spirit who makes our joy complete.

C - Amen.

P - Let us bow before God in humility, confessing our sin.

(Silence is kept for reflection)

Steadfast and faithful God,

C - you have revealed the ways of justice, yet we fail to follow you.

We are overwhelmed by the world's violence and suffering.

We are afraid to risk what we have for the sake of others.

For the harm we have caused, known and unknown, forgive us.

For the unjust demands we place on others and your creation,

forgive us. For the ways we turn away from you and our neighbor,

forgive us. Lead us back to you and set us on the right path;

in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

P - God's justice stretches beyond all understanding. God's compassion is beyond compare. In Jesus, God is always making a new way for us.

In Christ, you are already and always forgiven.

C - Amen

GREETING

L: 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.

+ KYRIE pg. 138

+ HYMN OF PRAISE pg. 139 “Glory to God in the Highest...”

PRAYER OF THE DAY

L: Almighty and eternal God,

C: you show perpetual lovingkindness to us your servants. Because we cannot rely on our own abilities, grant us your merciful judgment, and train us to embody the generosity of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

CONGREGATIONAL SONGS:

*He Knows My Name
Cornerstone*

FIRST READING - Jonah 3:10--4:11

¹⁰When God saw what [the people of Ninevah] did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it. ^{4:1}But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. ²He prayed to the LORD and said, “O LORD! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing. ³And now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live.” ⁴And the LORD said, “Is it right for you to be angry?” ⁵Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city, and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city. ⁶The LORD God appointed a bush, and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort; so, Jonah was very happy about the bush. ⁷But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. ⁸When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, “It is better for me to die than to live.” ⁹But God said to Jonah, “Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?” And he said, “Yes, angry enough to die.” ¹⁰Then the LORD said, “You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. ¹¹And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also many animals?”

SECOND READING: Philippians 1:21-30

²¹For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. ²²If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which I prefer. ²³I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; ²⁴but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you.

⁵Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, ²⁶so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again. ²⁷Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, ²⁸and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. ²⁹For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well—³⁰since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

+ACCLAMATION (pg. 142)

(sing) Alleluia, Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.

L: The Gospel according to Matthew, Chapter 20,

C: Glory to you, O Lord

GOSPEL: Matthew 20:1-16

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹"The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ²After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. ³When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; ⁴and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So, they went. ⁵When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. ⁶And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' ⁷They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' ⁸When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' ⁹When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. ¹⁰Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. ¹¹And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ¹²saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' ¹³But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage?' ¹⁴Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. ¹⁵Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?' ¹⁶So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

+L: The Gospel of the Lord

+C: Praise to you, O Christ

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

MESSAGE Pastor John Twiton

HYMN # 712 - *Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service*

+APOSTLES' CREED pg. 105

OFFERING -

MUSIC BY PRAISE TEAM: *I'll Fly Away*

OFFERTORY #186 "*Create in me....*"

THE PRAYERS (pg. 143)

(As the pastor concludes each petition with the words:
"Lord in your mercy..." The people respond: **Hear our prayer.**")

+THE LORD'S PRAYER (pg. 145) (right hand column)

SENDING

COMMUNITY WORD

+BLESSING

L: 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.

C: Amen.

+CONGREGATIONAL HYMN

#618 - *Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer*

+DISMISSAL

L: Go in peace, serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

WE WELCOME ALL TO ELC!

Everyone. Without exception. Regardless of race, ethnicity, gender expression, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, faith traditions, physical or mental abilities, financial resources, family status, or personal struggles. We are committed to being an anti-racist community. By the power of the Holy Spirit, we will work to extend God's grace, love, justice, and dignity. You belong here. Your story and your life are valuable. In Christ's love, we welcome you.

DEVOTIONS FOR THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 24, 2023

SHARE: What are your highs/lows for today?

READ: Read the daily readings to deepen your understanding:

Monday, Psalm 106:1-12, Confession of Israel's Sins

Tuesday, Romans 16:17-20, Final Instructions

Wednesday, Matthew 18:1-5, True Greatness

Thursday, Psalm 25:1-9, Prayer for Guidance

Friday, Revelation 12:7-12, Michael Defeats the Dragon

Saturday, Ezekiel 18:19-24, Individual Responsibility for Sin

TALK: Consider some of these ideas:

"So, the last will be first, and the first will be last."

Matthew 20:16

Jesus tells a parable about God's generosity, challenging the common assumption that God rewards people according to what they have earned or deserve.

- Do you ever find the grace of God for others, whom you don't like, as offensive? (Jonah 4:1)
- Do you consider your life to be "live(d) in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ"? (Philippians 1:27)
- What do you think and feel in response to the generosity of the vineyard owner? (Matt 20:15)

PRAY: Almighty and eternal God, you show perpetual lovingkindness to us your servants. Because we cannot rely on our own abilities, grant us your merciful judgment, and train us to embody the generosity of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

BLESS: The God of glory, Jesus Christ, name above all names, and the Spirit who lives in you, bless you now and forever. Amen.