

Sunday, September 13, 2020
15th Sunday after Pentecost

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

ALTAR FLOWERS *To the glory of God in memory of Pete Chirila and Dr. Mark Chirila.*

Charlotte Chirila

PRELUDE

“Grateful”

Mark Hayes

Sharon Gray, piano

APOSTLES’ CREED – Jeff Langdon

☑ 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 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!

WELCOMING SONG

“Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise”

ELW 834

Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
in light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
almighty, victorious, thy great name we praise!

Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,
nor wanting, nor wasting, thou rulest in might;
thy justice like mountains high soaring above
thy clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.

To all, life thou givest, to both great and small;
in all life thou livest, the true life of all;

we blossom and flourish like leaves on the tree,
and wither and perish, but naught changeth thee.

Thou reignest in glory; thou dwellest in light;
thine angels adore thee, all veiling their sight;
all laud we would render; oh, help us to see
'tis only the splendor of light hideth thee!

GREETING

- 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.**

SONG OF PRAISE

“Kyrie”

ELW 157

- L** *In peace, in peace, let us pray to the Lord.*
- C** **Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.**
- L** *For the reign of God, and for peace throughout the world,
for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.*
- C** **Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.**
- L** *For your people here who have come to give you praise,
for the strength to live your word, let us pray to the Lord.*
- C** **Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.**
- L** *Help, save, and defend us, O God.*
- C** **Amen.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

- P** *O Lord God, merciful judge,*
- C** **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!**

SPECIAL MUSIC

“Now Thank We All Our God”
Stephen Schmidt, organ

J.S. Bach

FIRST READING – Marilyn Hunt, 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.

Reflection

What was the wrong Joseph's brothers did to Joseph? (verse 15; see Genesis 37:12-35) What do you think the brothers thought Joseph might do to them? So what was their strategy? (verses 16-17) What was Joseph's response? (verses 17-18, 21) How did Joseph view what had happened? (verses 19-20) Do you think Joseph would have forgiven them even if they had not invoked their father, Jacob's, wishes? Why do you think Joseph was so kind to them? (for the story of what happened to Joseph after he was sold to the Egyptians, see Genesis 39-47)

Psalms 103:1-13— read together with Howard Harmsen

- ¹Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and all that is within me, bless God's holy name.
- ²Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and forget not all God's benefits—
- ³who forgives all your sins
and heals all your diseases;
- ⁴who redeems your life from the grave
and crowns you with steadfast love and mercy;
- ⁵who satisfies your desires with good things
so that your youth is renewed like an eagle's.
- ⁶O LORD, you provide vindication
and justice for all who are oppressed.
- ⁷You made known your ways to Moses
and your works to the children of Israel.
- ⁸LORD, you are full of compassion and mercy,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love;
- ⁹you will not always accuse us,
nor will you keep your anger forever.
- ¹⁰You have not dealt with us according to our sins,
nor repaid us according to our iniquities.
- ¹¹For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so great is your steadfast love for those who fear you.
- ¹²As far as the east is from the west,
so far have you removed our transgressions from us.
- ¹³As a father has compassion for his children,
so you have compassion for those who fear you, O LORD.

Reflection

Why does the psalmist bless the Lord? (verses 1-2) What does it mean to “bless the Lord”? How does the psalmist describe the ways that the Lord blesses us, which are described as “all God’s benefits”? (verses 2-7) How does the Lord treat us when we sin against the Lord? (verses 8-10) What does God’s compassion look like? (verses 11-13) How does this psalm reflect the way Joseph treated his brothers?

SECOND READING – Karri Chladek, reading

Romans 14:1-12

This Christian community has significant struggles with diversity. Here Paul helps us understand that despite different practices in worship and personal piety, we do not judge one another. All Christians belong to the Lord Jesus Christ who died for all of us and will judge each of us.

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 judgment 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.

Reflection

Paul is concerned about divisions among the Christian in Rome. One of the issues we know from 1 Corinthians is that of food (meat) prepared to be offered in the worship of idols. Most of the meat sold in Roman cities was sold in butcher shops that were connected to the temples dedicated to idols. So some Christians believed that to eat that meat was (or should be) forbidden to Christians, and Christians should eat only vegetables. (verse 2) Others believed that Christians can eat whatever is put in front of them. Even though Paul calls one of those groups “weak in faith,” he doesn’t take a side in this argument. What is Paul’s “side” in this? (verses 1-3) Why does he say that there should be no quarrels about such things? Who has the only right to judge them? (verse 4) What is the Lord’s judgment? What is another controversy that Paul addresses? (verse 5) I think of those Christians who are Seventh Day Adventists, and others who worship on Saturdays, as opposed to those of us who normally worship on Sundays (or some other day). What does Paul say about this controversy? (verse 6) He also says one more thing about the controversy of eating. What is it? What is important about the choices

we make about how to live? (verses 7-8) Have you ever thought about Christ being Lord of the dead as well as the living? What does that mean for those of us who have had loved ones die? How are we to treat brothers and sisters in faith who disagree with us about something? (verse 10) Who is the judge of all of us in our disagreements? (verses 11-12) Can you think of ideas or opinions we have that Paul might address in these ways? You may not be surprised to know that it's a lot easier for me to point a finger at those who disagree with me about something and say, "Listen to what Paul says." What this text calls me to do is to reflect on what Paul is saying to me!

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

"Alleluia!"

**☞ Alleluia! Lord and Savior:
open now your saving word.
Let it burn like fire within us;
speak until our hearts are stirred.
Alleluia! Lord, we sing
for the good news that you bring.**

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."

Reflection

What was Peter's question about forgiveness? (verse 21) What was Jesus' answer? (verse 22) Notes in the Lutheran Bible remind us that the number seven symbolizes completeness, what Jesus is saying is not, count it up until you get to seventy-seven, or seventy times seven (an

alternate translation), but as often as necessary. Then Jesus tells a parable about forgiveness. What does the king do? (verses 23-24) What is the king planning to do with the slave who owed him ten thousand talents, a huge debt? (verse 25) When the slave begs for time to pay, which was an impossible promise, what does the king do? (verses 26-27) What then did the slave do, when he encountered someone who owed him a small amount? (verse 28) How did the forgiven slave respond when the other asked for time to pay? (verses 29-30) What did the other slaves who saw what happened do? (verse 31) What happened next? (verses 32-34) Do you think Jesus tells us this story to threaten us? (verse 35) I think he wants to put things into perspective for us. We all have a tendency, I believe, to minimize our own sin and maximize the sins of others. If we think of what Jesus did for us, what does that do to our understanding of our own sin?

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Kris Langdon

SERMON

Rev. Keith Hohly

SONG OF THE DAY

"Make Me a Channel of Your Peace"

**Make me a channel of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me bring your love;
where there is injury, your pardon, Lord;
and where there's doubt, true faith in you.**

**Make me a channel of your peace.
Where there's despair in life, let me bring hope;
where there is darkness, only light;
and where there's sadness, ever joy.**

**O Master, grant that I may never seek
so much to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love with all my soul.**

**Make me a channel of your peace.
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
in giving of ourselves that we receive,
and in dying that we're born to eternal life.**

PRAYER SONG

"Lord, Listen To Your Children Praying"

ELW 752

**Lord, listen to your children praying,
Lord, send your Spirit in this place;
Lord, listen to your children praying,
send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION – led by David Bezona and Brenda Bass

We remember in our prayers

Marlene Hebb, Ann Newman, Jerry Harmsen, Scott Correa, Savannah Rousch, Lynn Ann Flora, Bonnie Hall, Kira Wall, Raymond Schubert, Tony Sloan, Chris & Andy Wilson, John Lawrence, Reed Nelson, Ashley Sollars, Nancy Reder, Dorothy Masteller, Phil Lewis, David Bezona, and Dee Rasmussen

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.

In the midst of a global crisis, we look to you for strength, hope and help in fighting the coronavirus pandemic. We pray for those stricken with this disease and those who are treating them, for those mourning the loss of life and those facing death, and for those who urgently work to find effective treatments for cure. We lift up to you those in our faith community needing your care: Marlene, Ann, Jerry, Scott, Savannah, Lynn Ann, Bonnie, Kira, Raymond, Tony, Chris & Andy, John, Reed, Ashley, Nancy, Dorothy, Phil, David, Dee, and those we name aloud or silently in our hearts. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

*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. 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!

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P *Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who creates, redeems, and sustains us and all of creation.*

C **Amen!**

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

Silence is kept for 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!**

SHARING OF THE PEACE

P *The peace of Christ be with you always.*

C **And also with you!**

DIALOGUE

- P** *The Lord be with you.*
C **And also with you.**
- P** *Lift up your hearts.*
C **We lift them to the Lord.**
- P** *Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.*
C **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

PREFACE

- P** *It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ;
who on this day overcame death and the grave,
and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:*

SANCTUS

- C** **Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of pow'r and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory, full of your glory.
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.**

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

- P** *In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread
and gave thanks, broke it,
and gave it to his disciples,
saying: Take and eat;
this is my body, given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.*
- Again, after supper,
he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink,
saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people
for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this in remembrance of me.*

LORD'S PRAYER

**☞ Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen!**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

☞ *Come to the banquet table where Christ gives himself as food and drink. All are welcome.*

COMMUNION

BLESSING

☞ *May the body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
strengthen you and keep you in His grace.*

☞ Amen!

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

☞ *We give you thanks, gracious God,*

☞ *that you have once again fed us with food beyond compare, the body and blood of Christ. Lead us from this place, nourished and forgiven, into your beloved vineyard to wipe away the tears of all who hunger and thirst, guided by the example of the same Jesus Christ and led by the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen!*

BENEDICTION

☞ *Mothering God,
Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you and lead you into the way of truth and life.*

☞ Amen!

SENDING SONG

"Grace Alone"

Ev'ry promise we can make
Ev'ry prayer and step of faith
Ev'ry diff'rence we will make
Is only by His grace
Ev'ry mountain we will climb
Ev'ry ray of hope we shine
Ev'ry blessing left behind
Is only by His grace

Refrain

Grace alone which God supplies
Strength unknown He will provide
Christ in us our Cornerstone
We will go forth in grace alone

Ev'ry soul we long to reach
Ev'ry heart we hope to teach
Ev'rywhere we share His peace
Is only by His grace
Ev'ry loving word we say
Ev'ry tear we wipe away
Ev'ry sorrow turned to praise
Is only by His grace. *Refrain*

DISMISSAL – Jeff Langdon

P *Go in peace. Serve the Lord.*

G **Thanks be to God!**

POSTLUDE

"Praise"

Sharon Gray, organ

Carl Simone

First Lutheran Church
302 South 10th St.
St. Joseph, MO 64503 / 816-232-8378 / flcsj302@gmail.com
www.flcsj.org
Rev. Keith Hohly, Interim Pastor

Instruments: Drums – Bruce Taylor | Piano and Organ – Sharon Gray | Guitar – Jim Pierce

Song leaders and vocal talents: Sharmyn Thompson, Rev. Keith Hohly, Deb Hohly,
Dave Newman, Jeff Langdon, Phil Lewis, Nancy Lewis, Jim Pierce, Juel Pierce, Jim Bunge
and Carol Bunge

Reflections on Today's Readings written by Rev. Juel Pierce

Music and Liturgy:

"Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise" / Public Domain

*"Kyrie" | Text: Lutheran Book of Worship, adapt. Marty Haugen, b. 1950
Text © 1990 GIA Publications, Inc., 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358. All rights reserved. Used by permission.*

*"Make Me a Channel of Your Peace" | CCLI Song # 6399315 Ed Bolduc | John Angotti | Thomas W. Jefferson
© 2009 World Library Publications (Admin. by G.I.A. Publications, Inc.)
For use solely with the SongSelect® Terms of Use. All rights reserved. www.ccli.com
CCLI License # 1206797*

*"Lord, Listen To Your Children Praying" | Text: Ken Medema, b. 1943
Text © 1973 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission.*

*"Grace Alone" | CCLI Song # 2335524 | Jeff Nelson | Scott Wesley Brown
© 1998 Universal Music - Brentwood Benson Publishing (Admin. by Brentwood-Benson Music Publishing, Inc.)
For use solely with the SongSelect®. Terms of Use. All rights reserved. www.ccli.com
CCLI License # 1206797*

New Revised Standard Version Bible, Copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission.

All rights reserved. Revised Common Lectionary, Copyright © 1992 Consultation on Common Texts, admin Augsburg Fortress. Used by permission.

*Copyright © 2020 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.
Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SAS015552*

CCLI License # 1206797