

Sunday, September 27, 2020  
17<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**ALTAR FLOWERS** *To the glory of God in appreciation to those who make online services possible.*

*Jim & Pam Farrell*

**PRELUDE**

***“Just a Closer Walk with Thee”***

Sharon Gray, piano

arr. Jack Schrader

**APOSTLES’ CREED**

**☒ 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**

***“Jesus Shall Reign”***

**ELW 434**

**Jesus shall reign where'er the sun  
does its successive journeys run;  
his kingdom stretch from shore to shore,  
till moons shall wax and wane no more.**

**To him shall endless prayer be made,  
and praises throng to crown his head;  
his name like sweet perfume shall rise  
with ev'ry morning sacrifice.**

People and realms of ev'ry tongue  
dwell on his love with sweetest song;  
and infant voices shall proclaim  
their early blessings on his name.

Blessings abound where'er he reigns:  
the pris'ners leap to lose their chains,  
the weary find eternal rest,  
and all who suffer want are blest.

Let ev'ry creature rise and bring  
peculiar honors to our king;  
angels descend with songs again,  
and earth repeat the loud amen.

#### GREETING

- P** *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.*
- G** **And also with you.**

#### SONG OF PRAISE

#### *“Kyrie”*

ELW 157

- L** *In peace, in peace, let us pray to the Lord.*
- G** **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.*
- G** **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.*
- G** **Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.  
Lord, have mercy.**
- L** *Help, save, and defend us, O God.*
- G** **Amen.**

#### PRAYER OF THE DAY

- P** *God of love, giver of life,*
- G** **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!**

**SPECIAL MUSIC**

**“Grace”**

Carolyn Hamlin

Debra Hohly, soprano

Charles Hoeft, piano

**FIRST READING** – Joyce Stroud, reading

**Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32**

*Ezekiel challenges those who think they cannot change because of what their parents were and did, or who think they cannot reverse their own previous behavior. God insistently invites people to turn and live.*

<sup>1</sup>The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>2</sup>What 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”? <sup>3</sup>As I live, says the Lord GOD, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. <sup>4</sup>Know 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.

<sup>25</sup>Yet 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? <sup>26</sup>When 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. <sup>27</sup>Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. <sup>28</sup>Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. <sup>29</sup>Yet 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?

<sup>30</sup>Therefore 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. <sup>31</sup>Cast 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? <sup>32</sup>For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord GOD. Turn, then, and live.

**Reflection**

*What excuse do the people of Israel use for the problems that they have and the sins they commit? (verses 1-2) What is God’s response (through Ezekiel) to that excuse? (verses 3-4) What do you think it means when God says, “all lives are mine”? Who is responsible for the sins of the people of this generation? How do the people respond to this? (verse 25) How does Ezekiel, speaking for the Lord, answer this? (verses 26-29) What is the grace in this conversation between the Lord and the people? (verse 30) What comes with repentance? (verse 31) What does God want for all the people? (verse 32) How do you hear the words “Turn, then, and live”? What happens to a relationship when one party says, “It hurts me when you do this (whatever it is), and the one to whom it is said says, “You’re just being unfair”? Can you think of a time when you’ve had to make a choice between continuing to do something that will displease God (or your spouse, your parent, your best friend) and giving it up for the sake of the relationship? What did you do?*

**Psalm 25:1-9** – read together with David Bezona

- <sup>1</sup>To you, O LORD,  
I lift up my soul.
- <sup>2</sup>My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be put to shame,  
nor let my enemies triumph over me.
- <sup>3</sup>Let none who look to you be put to shame;  
rather let those be put to shame who are treacherous.
- <sup>4</sup>Show me your ways, O LORD,  
and teach me your paths.
- <sup>5</sup>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.
- <sup>6</sup>Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love,  
for they are from everlasting.
- <sup>7</sup>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.
- <sup>8</sup>You are gracious and upright, O LORD;  
therefore you teach sinners in your way.
- <sup>9</sup>You lead the lowly in justice  
and teach the lowly your way.

**Reflection**

*What does the psalmist profess to the Lord? (verses 1-2) What is the psalmist's prayer? (verses 2-3) How does the psalmist know what will please the Lord? (verses 4-5) What kind of behavior does the psalmist know will please God? (verse 6) What does the psalmist want God to do about the sins s/he has committed? (verse 7) What does the psalmist expect from the Lord? (verses 8-9) What makes a person "lowly"? Although this psalm does not use the word, the opposite of "lowly" is "arrogant." When the psalmist asks again and again for the teaching of the Lord, is it lowly or arrogant? What happens when we ask God to teach us God's way?*

**SECOND READING** – Janice Harmsen, reading

**Philippians 2:1-13**

*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.*

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

And being found in human form,  
    <sup>8</sup>he humbled himself  
    and became obedient to the point of death—  
    even death on a cross.

<sup>9</sup>Therefore God also highly exalted him  
    and gave him the name  
    that is above every name,

<sup>10</sup>so that at the name of Jesus  
    every knee should bend,  
    in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

<sup>11</sup>and every tongue should confess  
    that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
    to the glory of God the Father.

<sup>12</sup>Therefore, 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; <sup>13</sup>for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

### **Reflection**

*How does Paul describe life in Christ? (verse 1) How do we, as Christians, live that life? (verse 2) Paul contrasts selfish ambition or conceit, and humility. How do we live out humility? (verses 3-4) What is our example (and more than example) of humility? (verses 5-8) How do we have the mind of Christ? What enabled Christ to live in humility and obedience to God? Perhaps we fear humility and obedience to God because we feel we might be beaten down. How did God show God's pleasure and joy in Jesus? (verses 9-11) The "therefore" in verse 9 indicates that Christ's exaltation and the worship of Jesus as Lord follows directly on Jesus' humility and obedience. Now Paul uses a "therefore" to the Philippian Christians and to us with an exhortation about how we should live. (verse 12) How is it possible for us to work out our own salvation? Who is the source of all our good work and our salvation? (verse 13) How does this text apply to your real, everyday life in this time of pandemic?*

### **GOSEPL 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 21:23-32**

*After driving the moneychangers out of the temple (21:12), Jesus begins teaching there. His authority is questioned by the religious leaders, who are supposed to be in charge of the temple.*

<sup>23</sup>When [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?" <sup>24</sup>Jesus 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. <sup>25</sup>Did 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?' <sup>26</sup>But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet." <sup>27</sup>So 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.

<sup>28</sup>"What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' <sup>29</sup>He answered, 'I will not'; but later he changed his mind and went. <sup>30</sup>The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir'; but he did not go. <sup>31</sup>Which 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. <sup>32</sup>For 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."

### **Reflection**

*What question do the chief priests and elders ask Jesus to challenge his authority? (verse 23) How does Jesus answer them? (verses 24-25) So what was the answer of the chief priests and elders? (verses 25-27) Do you think there was anything Jesus could have said that would have answered them to their satisfaction? This encounter reminds me of times I visited a patient in the hospital as chaplain, and it was clear from their response to me as I opened the door that they would not hear anything I said because I am a woman. Another example of this is when black people try to tell white people about the difficulties they have in living with systemic (and personal) racism, and their testimony is dismissed. The parable that Jesus tells is in response to the issue that our Ezekiel text, and Jesus' encounter with the chief priests and elders, illustrates. He tells a parable of a vineyard owner with two sons, a good son and a bad son (although Jesus does not label them as such). The "bad" son refuses his father's request; the "good" son answers the request with a promise to do what his father wants. What does each of them actually do? (verses 28-30) Then Jesus asks the question, which one of them did the will of the father? (verse 31) What is obedience to God (the will of the father) in this encounter? How do the chief priests and elders live out their disobedience? (verse 32) Who are the obedient ones? In this context, think back to our Ezekiel reading. How do the chief priests and elders show that they have learned nothing from Ezekiel? Or God?*

**CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

Misty Coyle

**SERMON**

Rev. Keith Hohly

**SONG OF THE DAY**

***"Change My Heart, O God"***

**ELW 801**

**Change my heart, O God;  
make it ever true.  
Change my heart, O God;  
may I be like you.  
You are the potter;  
I am the clay.**

Mold me and make me;  
this is what I pray.  
Change my heart, O God;  
make it ever true.  
Change my heart, O God;  
may I be like you.

PRAYER SONG

*“Hear Our Prayer”*

ELW 178

Hear our prayer, hear our prayer, Lord, make us whole:  
peace to all people, hope for each soul.  
God of grace, in this place, hear now our prayer.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION – led by Jim & Juel Pierce

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*We remember in our prayers*

*Gilda Jones, Cathy Michaelis, Tom Farrell, Sonny Thompson, Pamma Williams, Kaitlyn Wall, Marlene Hebb, Ann Newman, Jerry Harmsen, Scott Correa, Savannah Rousch, Lynn Ann Flora, Kira Wall, Andy Wilson, John Lawrence, Reed Nelson, Ashley Sollars, Nancy Reder, Dorothy Masteller, Phil Lewis, David Bezona, Dee Rasmussen, those affected by wildfires in the western United States and those affected by storms in the Gulf*

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

*A brief silence.*

*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,  
**hear our prayer.***

*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,  
**hear our prayer.***

*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,  
**hear our prayer.***

*Our lives are yours, O God. Relieve the suffering of those who are ill in body, mind, or spirit. Defend the lives and welfare of children who are abused or neglected, hungry or exploited, bullied or lonely. 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: Gilda, Cathy, Tom, Sonny, Pamma, Kaitlyn, Marlene, Ann, Jerry, Scott, Savannah, Lynn Ann, Kira, Andy, John, Reed, Ashley, Nancy, Dorothy, Phil, David, Dee, those affected by wildfires in the western United States and those affected by storms in the Gulf and those we name aloud or silently in our hearts. Lord, in your mercy,*  
**hear our prayer.**

*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,*  
**hear our prayer.**

*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,*  
**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.*

**G** **Amen!**

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

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

**P** *Faithful God,*

**G** **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.*

**☞ Amen!**

### **SHARING OF THE PEACE**

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

**☞ And also with you!**

### **DIALOGUE**

**P** *The Lord be with you.*

**☞ And also with you.**

**P** *Lift up your hearts.*

**☞ We lift them to the Lord.**

**P** *Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.*

**☞ 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**

**☞ 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**

**P** *Mothering God,  
Father, ~~F~~ Son, and Holy Spirit,  
bless you and lead you into the way of truth and life.*  
**G** **Amen!**

## **SENDING SONG**

***“He Is Exalted”***

**He is exalted  
The King is exalted on high  
I will praise Him  
He is exalted forever exalted  
And I will praise His name**

**He is the Lord  
Forever His truth shall reign  
Heaven and earth  
Rejoice in His holy name  
He is exalted  
The King is exalted on high**

## **DISMISSAL – Misty Coyle**

**P** *Go in peace. Serve the Lord.*  
**G** **Thanks be to God!**

## **POSTLUDE**

***“Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven”***  
Sharon Gray, organ

setting by Lani Smith

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**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:**

*"Jesus Shall Reign" ELW #434 | Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748, alt.*

*"Kyrie" | Text: Lutheran Book of Worship, adapt. Marty Haugen, b. 1950  
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*"Change My Heart, O God" | CCLI Song # 1565 | Eddie Espinosa  
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*"Hear Our Prayer" ELW #178 | Text: Paul Andress, b. 1956  
Text © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.*

*"He Is Exalted" | CCLI Song # 17827 | Twila Paris  
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