

Sunday, September 20, 2020  
16<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**ALTAR FLOWERS** *To the glory of God in loving memory of Ron Wall*

*Irene and Daniel Wall*

**PRELUDE**

*"Give Me Jesus"*  
Sharon Gray, piano

*arr. Mark Hayes*

**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**

*"Praise to You, O God of Mercy"*

**ELW 208**

Praise to you, O God of mercy:  
thanks be to you forever!  
Raising high the weak and lowly:  
thanks be to you forever!

From of old you loved and sought us:  
thanks be to you forever!  
Truth and justice you have taught us:  
thanks be to you forever!  
Strong is your faithfulness,  
strong is your love,

rememb'ring your covenant of life with us.

Praise to you, O God of mercy:

thanks be to you forever!

Raising high the weak and lowly:

thanks be to you forever!

Thanks be to you forever!

## 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** *Almighty and eternal God,*

**G** **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!**

## SPECIAL MUSIC

*“How I Love Your Word”*

Mark Hayes

Karen Jensen, soprano

## FIRST READING – Kathy Wessler, reading

**Jonah 3:10--4:11**

*After Jonah’s short sermon in 3:4, the Ninevites all repented and God decided to spare the city. Jonah objected to this and became even more angry when God ordered a worm to destroy a plant that was providing shade. The book ends with a question that challenges any who are not*

*ready to forgive: You, Jonah, are all worked up about a bush, but shouldn't I be concerned about a hundred and twenty thousand Ninevites?*

<sup>10</sup>When 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.

<sup>4:1</sup>But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. <sup>2</sup>He 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. <sup>3</sup>And now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live." <sup>4</sup>And the LORD said, "Is it right for you to be angry?" <sup>5</sup>Then 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.

<sup>6</sup>The 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. <sup>7</sup>But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. <sup>8</sup>When 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."

<sup>9</sup>But God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?" And he said, "Yes, angry enough to die." <sup>10</sup>Then 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. <sup>11</sup>And 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?"

### **Reflection**

*First of all, if you haven't read the book of Jonah recently, I'd suggest that you do so now, to get the whole story. If what you know about Jonah is only that he's swallowed by a fish or a whale, then you really need to read it. (It might take 15 minutes, if you read slowly and carefully!—and the second chapter is a psalm.) So if you don't read the whole book/short story, God sent Jonah to the city of Nineveh, the capital city of Assyria, an enemy of Israel's. Jonah didn't want to go, but finally he did, and the people listened to his preaching and repented, and this is where our text picks up the story. What did God do? (3:10) How did Jonah feel about it? (4:1) Why didn't Jonah want to go to Nineveh? (4:2) So now what did Jonah want God to do? (4:3) How did God respond? (4:4) Jonah still hadn't given up hope that what he wanted would happen. What did he do? (4:5) How did the Lord respond to this action of Jonah's? (4:6) How did Jonah feel about this? Then what did God do? (4:7-8) What did Jonah pray for then? What was God's response? (4:9) And how did Jonah talk back to God? How did God respond to Jonah? (4:10-11) Are there some people that are not worth saving? Did God think that all who lived in Nineveh deserved to die? Are there any people who you think deserve to die? How does God look at those people? One of my very favorite Bible verses is Jonah 4:11. I know there are people I think are not worth much, "who do not know their right hand from their left." When I remember this verse and the story of Jonah that goes with it, first of all, I remember that there are people who think that I'm one of those who might not be worth saving. And I remember*

*that God looks at me differently than those people do. And that God also looks at the people I think aren't worth saving differently than I look at them. What do you think?*

**Psalm 145:1-8**– read together with Jim Pierce

- <sup>1</sup>I will exalt you, my God and king,  
and bless your name forever and ever.
- <sup>2</sup>Every day will I bless you  
and praise your name forever and ever.
- <sup>3</sup>Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised!  
There is no end to your greatness.
- <sup>4</sup>One generation shall praise your works to another  
and shall declare your power.
- <sup>5</sup>I will speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty  
and all your marvelous works.
- <sup>6</sup>They shall tell of the might of your wondrous acts,  
and I will recount your greatness.
- <sup>7</sup>They shall publish the remembrance of your great goodness;  
they shall sing joyfully of your righteousness.
- <sup>8</sup>The LORD is gracious and full of compassion,  
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

### **Reflection**

*Why does the psalmist exalt God and bless God's name forever? (verses 1-3) Who else praises God? (verse 4) From whom did you learn to praise God? What do they tell about God? (verses 5-7) What specifically about God's majesty does the psalmist proclaim? (verse 8) Remember Jonah? He didn't think it was so great that the Lord is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. I try to remember that God doesn't only love me and the people I think are worth it! What do you think?*

**SECOND READING** – Karen Jensen, reading

**Philippians 1:21-30**

*Paul writes to the Philippians from prison. Though he is uncertain about the outcome of his imprisonment, he is committed to the ministry of the gospel and calls on the Philippians to live lives that reflect and enhance the gospel mission.*

<sup>21</sup>For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. <sup>22</sup>If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which I prefer. <sup>23</sup>I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; <sup>24</sup>but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. <sup>25</sup>Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, <sup>26</sup>so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again.

<sup>27</sup>Only, 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, <sup>28</sup>and 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. <sup>29</sup>For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but

of suffering for him as well—<sup>30</sup>since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

### **Reflection**

*Paul's letter to the Philippians is full of joy. Knowing this, why does he write to them that "living is Christ and dying is gain"? (verse 21) What does he mean? (verses 22-24) Do you think it was Paul's choice whether to live or die? Perhaps he was feeling a bit like Jonah? It sounds as though he has chosen to live. Why? (verses 25-26) Even if God loves sinners, how does Paul want his readers to live? (verse 27) How does that make them one with Paul and other Christians? How will that help them when "opponents" oppose them? (verse 28) What will it do to their opponents? What privileges do they have because of God's love for them? (verse 29) Is suffering for Christ a privilege? That reminds me of a story about one of the saints, who when she was in trouble said, "I'm surprised, God, that you have any friends at all, if this is how you treat them!" That might be Paul's comment as well! (verse 30) How about you?*

### **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 20:1-16**

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

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

## **Reflection**

*If there was a theme to these readings, it might be, our thoughts are not God's thoughts. This text is a parable about the kingdom of heaven. The landowner is one who hires day laborers, those who had no work, who stood about in the marketplace waiting for someone to give them a job for today, and to pay them so they could buy the things necessary for life. What is the agreement between the landowner and the laborers he hires first thing in the morning? (verse 2) He evidently needed more laborers, so what did he do next? (verses 3-5) What is his agreement with them? (verse 4) What does he say to the laborers he hires at five o'clock? (verses 6-7) What happens when the work day is over? (verse 8) Who gets paid first? Who gets paid last? (verse 9) What did they expect? (verse 10) What did they think? (verses 11-12) What did the landowner tell them about their pay? (verses 13-14) I am pretty sure that if I were one of those early laborers, I would have felt the same as they did. How do we expect God to treat us Christians who have been lifelong Christians and always tried to do what is right? But our thoughts are not God's thoughts. Who does God love more? (This might be a trick question!)*

## **CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

Kris Langdon

## **SERMON**

Rev. Keith Hohly

## **SONG OF THE DAY**

*"There's a Wideness in God's Mercy"*

**ELW 588**

**There's a wideness in God's mercy,  
like the wideness of the sea;  
there's a kindness in God's justice  
which is more than liberty.  
There is no place where earth's sorrows  
are more felt than up in heav'n.  
There is no place where earth's failings  
have such kindly judgment giv'n.  
  
There is welcome for the sinner,  
and a promised grace made good;  
there is mercy with the Savior;  
there is healing in his blood.  
There is grace enough for thousands  
of new worlds as great as this;  
there is room for fresh creations  
in that upper home of bliss.  
  
For the love of God is broader  
than the measures of our mind;  
and the heart of the Eternal  
is most wonderfully kind.  
But we make this love too narrow**

by false limits of our own;  
and we magnify its strictness  
with a zeal God will not own.

'Tis not all we owe to Jesus;  
it is something more than all:  
greater good because of evil,  
larger mercy through the fall.  
Make our love, O God, more faithful;  
let us take you at your word,  
and our lives will be thanksgiving  
for the goodness of the Lord.

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 Phil and Nancy Lewis

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*We remember in our prayers*

*Kaitlyn Wall, Marlene Hebb, Ann Newman, Jerry Harmsen, Scott Correa, Savannah Rousch, Lynn Ann Flora, Kira Wall, Raymond Schubert, 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 hurricanes 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.*

*Generous God, you make the last first, and the first last. Where this gospel challenges the church, equip it for its works of service. Strengthen those who suffer for Christ. Lord, in your mercy,*  
**hear our prayer.**

*Sun and wind, bushes and worms, cattle and great cities—nothing in creation is outside your concern, mighty God. In your mercy, tend to it all. Give us a spirit of generosity toward all you have made. Lord, in your mercy,*  
**hear our prayer.**

*Where we find envy and create enemies, you provide enough for all. Bring peace to places of conflict and violence. Inspire leaders with creativity and wisdom. Bless the work of negotiators, peacekeepers, and development workers. Lord, in your mercy,*

**hear our prayer.**

*Reveal yourself to all in need as you are gracious and merciful, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, ready to relent from punishing. Accompany judges and lawyers, victims of crime and those serving sentences. Give fruitful labor and a livelihood to those seeking work. Lord, in your mercy,*

**hear our prayer.**

*Even beyond our expectations, you choose to give generously. Grant life, health, and courage to all who are in need. 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, Kira, Kaitlyn, Andy, Raymond, John, Reed, Ashley, Nancy, Dorothy, Phil, David, Dee, those affected by wildfires in the western United States, those affected by the hurricanes in the gulf, and those we name aloud or silently in our hearts. Lord, in your mercy,*

**hear our prayer.**

*We praise you for the generations that have declared your power to us. Give us faithfulness to follow them, living for Christ, until you call us to join them in the joyful song around his throne. 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.*

**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

**G** **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

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

## COMMUNION

### BLESSING

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

**G** **Amen!**

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**P** *We give you thanks, gracious God,*

**G** **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, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit,*

*bless you and lead you into the way of truth and life.*

**G Amen!**

## SENDING SONG

*“Great Is The Lord”*

Great is the Lord  
He is holy and just  
By His power we trust in His love  
Great is the Lord  
He is faithful and true  
By His mercy He proves He is love

Great is the Lord  
And worthy of glory  
Great is the Lord  
And worthy of praise  
Great is the Lord  
Now lift up your voice  
Now lift up your voice  
Great is the Lord  
Great is the Lord

## DISMISSAL – Jeff Langdon

**P** *Go in peace. Serve the Lord.*

**G** **Thanks be to God!**

## POSTLUDE

*“Postlude in F”*  
Sharon Gray, organ

Eric Thiman

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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:**

*"Praise to You, O God of Mercy" ELW #208 | Text: Now the Feast and Celebration, Marty Haugen, b. 1950  
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*"Kyrie" | Text: Lutheran Book of Worship, adapt. Marty Haugen, b. 1950  
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*"There's a Wideness in God's Mercy" ELW #588 | Text: Frederick W. Faber, 1814-1863, alt.*

*"Lord, Listen To Your Children Praying" ELW #752 | Text: Ken Medema, b. 1943  
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*"Great Is The Lord" | CCLI Song # 1149 Deborah D. Smith | Michael W. Smith  
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