

Sunday, September 6, 2020
14th Sunday after Pentecost

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

ALTAR FLOWERS *To the glory of God in celebration of Carol and Jim Bunge's 43rd anniversary.*
Phil & Nancy Lewis

PRELUDE

"Meditation"
Sharon Gray, piano

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, My Soul, the God of Heaven"

ELW 864

Praise, my soul, the God of heaven;
joyfully your tribute bring.
Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,
evermore God's praises sing.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praises everlasting ring!

God be praised for grace and favor
to our forebears in distress.
God be praised, the same forever,
slow to chide and swift to bless.

Alleluia! Alleluia!
Glorious is God's faithfulness!

**Frail as summer's flow'r we flourish,
blows the wind and it is gone;
but, as mortals rise and perish,
God endures unchanging on.
Alleluia! Alleluia!**
Praise the great Eternal One!

**Angels sing in adoration,
in God's presence, face to face.
Sun and moon and all creation,
all who dwell in time and space.
Alleluia! Alleluia!**
Praise with us the God of grace!

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** *O Lord God,*
- G** **enliven and preserve your church with your perpetual mercy. Without your help, we
mortals will fail; remove far from us everything that is harmful, and lead us toward all
that gives life and salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen!**

FIRST READING – Ann Newman, reading**Ezekiel 33:7-11**

God appointed Ezekiel as a sentinel for the house of Israel. Ezekiel must faithfully convey God's warnings to the people. Remarkably, God—who is about to attack Jerusalem—gives a warning with the hope that repentance will make the attack unnecessary.

⁷So you, mortal, I have made a sentinel for the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. ⁸If I say to the wicked, "O wicked ones, you shall surely die," and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but their blood I will require at your hand. ⁹But if you warn the wicked to turn from their ways, and they do not turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but you will have saved your life.

¹⁰Now you, mortal, say to the house of Israel, Thus you have said: "Our transgressions and our sins weigh upon us, and we waste away because of them; how then can we live?" ¹¹Say to them, As I live, says the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from their ways and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel?

Reflection

What is a sentinel? (verse 7) I thought I knew what it was, but I had to look it up for sure. Some of the words that are synonyms for "sentinel" are guard, watcher, lookout...Someone who watches when others are asleep or busy to warn if something bad is coming. The Lord made Ezekiel a sentinel for Israel. What is he to warn them about? What will happen if he does not warn them? (verse 8) What will happen to those he did not warn? What will happen to him? What if he does warn them, but they don't listen? (verse 9) What will happen to them? What will happen to him? Who is he warning? (verse 10) Do they have a sense that something is wrong? What are they saying? What does God want Ezekiel to say to them, who already know something is wrong? (verse 11) Does God want them to die? What does God want them to do? Another word we use for the words "turn back" is "repent." Where have we heard that before? Who are we in this passage? Perhaps both—those whom God is calling as sentinels, and those who need to listen to the sentinels. What do you think?

Psalm 119:33-40— read together with David Bezona

³³Teach me, O LORD, the way of your statutes,
and I shall keep it to the end.

³⁴Give me understanding, and I shall keep your teaching;
I shall keep it with all my heart.

³⁵Lead me in the path of your commandments,
for that is my desire.

³⁶Incline my heart to your decrees
and not to unjust gain.

³⁷Turn my eyes from beholding falsehood;
give me life in your way.

- ³⁸Fulfill your promise to your servant,
which is for those who fear you.
³⁹Turn away the reproach that I dread,
because your judgments are good.
⁴⁰Behold, I long for your commandments;
by your righteousness enliven me.

Reflection

As I read this psalm, it sounds like a psalm written by someone who has heard the warning of the sentinel. What does the psalmist ask for? (verse 33) Each verse asks for the same thing using different words. What does the psalmist want in verse 34? Verse 35? Verses 36-37 not only ask for what the psalmist desires, but also to warn against what would carry the psalmist against that desire. Why does the psalmist want to do what the Lord desires? (verses 38-40) If you were to memorize one verse from this text to help you remember what the Lord desires for you, which would it be?

SECOND READING – Nancy Lewis, reading

Romans 13:8-14

The obligation of Christians is to love one another and so fulfill the heart and goal of the law. Clothes make the person as we “put on the Lord Jesus Christ” and live today in light of the future God has in store for us.

⁸Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. ⁹The commandments, “You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet”; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, “Love your neighbor as yourself.” ¹⁰Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.

¹¹Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; ¹²the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; ¹³let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. ¹⁴Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

Reflection

In this text, Paul is giving more advice about how to live as followers of Jesus. Why is “love one another” the exception to Paul’s advice to “owe no one anything”? (verse 8) How can we “owe” love to one another? How is this fulfilling the law? (verses 9-10) It sounds easy, doesn’t it? How do you live out “love your neighbor as yourself” and “Love does no wrong to a neighbor”? What time is it, according to Paul? (verse 11) Why does Paul write so urgently about what time it is? (verse 12) How do we “live honorably”? (verse 13) What behaviors are we to avoid? Remember (verse 14) that “flesh” means our own desires and any way that we seek to save ourselves. How does “put[ting] on the Lord Jesus Christ” help us to live honorably? Paul expected the end of the world to come suddenly and soon. We know that it did not come in Paul’s lifetime. Does this knowledge change our behavior and intention to live as Jesus wants us to? Why or why not?

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 18:15-20

Jesus offers practical advice to his disciples on how individuals—and the church as a whole—should go about restoring relationships when one member has sinned against another.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹⁵“If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. ¹⁶But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. ¹⁷If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. ¹⁸Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. ¹⁹Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. ²⁰For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.”

Reflection

In this text, Jesus instructs the disciples about dealing with sin. What are the steps you should take when someone sins against you? (verses 15-17) It goes without saying (but I’m saying it anyway) that the first step is not to complain to someone else about the one they perceive as the sinner. How should someone who refuses to listen be treated? (verse 17) Notes in the Lutheran Bible point out what we already know, that Jesus is a friend of tax collectors and sinners. Which complicates that whole “step by step” process, doesn’t it? There’s another complication, which a reflection I read on this text pointed out. What happens when we who are older, lifelong members of the church are the ones who do the sinning? The author of the reflection reminded me that Dylann Roof, who several years ago killed the members of the Emanuel AME Church during a prayer meeting, was a member of an ELCA congregation. Those of us who are of German, Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish heritage may assume that real Lutherans are of northern European heritage. This is a reflection of the assumption of many that “real Americans” are white. As we read about hundreds of African-American men and women who are shot by police, who so far have mostly not been charged with a crime and in all cases (that I know of) have not been convicted of a crime, we may be called by Jesus to wonder if the true church is not made up of children and babies (see Matthew 18:1-5), outcasts (Matthew 15:21-28), sick, hungry, thirsty people (Matthew 15:29-38) and others who are calling on us, the well-integrated, middle class people in the church to be reconciled to them. The church we have known is changing, that’s for sure. For those of us who are comfortable in it, we grieve that change. Jesus calls us to be reconciled, and perhaps the ones we find most unlikely are the sentinels God has appointed for us. What do you think?

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Kris Langdon

SERMON

Rev. Keith Hohly

SONG OF THE DAY

"Bind Us Together"

Refrain

Bind us together Lord
Bind us together with cords
That cannot be broken
Bind us together Lord
Bind us together Lord
Bind us together with love

There is only one God
There is only one King
There is only one body
That is why we can sing *Refrain*

Made for the glory of God
Purchased by His precious Son
Born with the right to be clean
For Jesus the vict'ry has won *Refrain*

You are the fam'ly of God
You are the promise divine
You are God's chosen desire
You are the glorious new wine *Refrain*

PRAYER SONG

"Let My Prayer Be a Fragrant Offering"

Let my prayer be a fragrant offering,
as incense to you arise.
Let my prayer be a fragrant offering,
my hands lifted up in praise.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION – led by Bruce & Debbie Taylor

We remember in our prayers

Savannah Rousch, Phil Heeler, 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.

Unite your church, O God. Grant us the gifts of repentance and reconciliation. Bless the cooperative work of churches in this community. Strengthen ecumenical partnerships; guide the work of the Lutheran World Federation and the World Council of Churches. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Protect your creation, O God. Teach us ways that do not harm what you have entrusted to our care. Renew and enliven places suffering from drought, flood, storms, or pollution. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Turn nations and leaders from ways that lead to death. Shape new paths toward peace and cooperation, teaching us to recognize one another as neighbors. Guide legislators, civil servants, judges, and police toward laws that protect the well-being of all. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Tend to all in need of your compassion. Hear the cries of those awaiting justice and those yearning for forgiveness. Give community to the lonely and neighbors to the outcast. Shelter all who are vulnerable in body, mind, or spirit. 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: Phil, Lynn Ann, Bonnie, Ann, Marla, Gerald, Raymond, Tony, Andy, John, Reed, Ashley, Nancy, Dorothy, Phil, David, and Dee, and those we name aloud or silently in our hearts. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Sustain us in our work, O God, and give work to those who need it. Shape societies to ensure fair treatment for all who labor. Help us to love our neighbors in and through our work. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We remember with thanksgiving those who have died in faith. As you equipped them, equip us with your protection and power, until with them we see your salvation. 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,*

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

**☩ 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

☩ *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

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

“They’ll Know We Are Christians By Our Love”

**We are one in the Spirit
We are one in the Lord
We are one in the Spirit
We are one in the Lord
And we pray that all unity
May one day be restored**

Refrain

**And they’ll know we are Christians
By our love by our love
Yes they’ll know we are Christians
By our love**

**We will walk with each other
We will walk hand in hand
We will walk with each other
We will walk hand in hand
And together we’ll spread the news
That God is in our land *Refrain***

**We will work with each other
We will work side by side
We will work with each other
We will work side by side
And we'll guard each man's dignity
And save each man's pride *Refrain***

**All praise to the Father
From whom all things come
And all praise to Christ Jesus
His only Son
And all praise to the Spirit
Who makes us one *Refrain***

DISMISSAL – Jeff Langdon

☞ *Go in peace. Serve the Lord.*

☞ **Thanks be to God!**

POSTLUDE

“Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee”

Ludwig Von Beethoven, arr. Gordon Young

Sharon Gray, organ

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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, My Soul, the God of Heaven" / Public Domain

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