

Sunday, November 15, 2020
24th Sunday after Pentecost

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

ALTAR FLOWERS *To the glory of God in loving memory of Joann Holmes.*

Ed Holmes

PRELUDE

“Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee”

arr. Don Hustad

Sharon Gray, organ

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

“O Zion, Haste”

ELW 668

O Zion, haste, your mission high fulfilling,
to tell to all the world that God is light;
that he who made all nations is not willing
one soul should perish, lost in shades of night.

Refrain

Publish glad tidings, tidings of peace,
tidings of Jesus, redemption, and release.

Publish to ev’ry people, tongue, and nation
that God, in whom they live and move, is love;
tell how he stooped to save his lost creation

and died on earth that we might live above. *Refrain*

He comes again! O Zion, ere you meet him,
make known to ev'ry heart his saving grace;
let none whom he has ransomed fail to greet him,
through your neglect, unfit to see his face. *Refrain*

GREETING

☞ *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.*

☞ **And also with you.**

SONG OF PRAISE

"This is the Feast"

pg. 140

This is the feast of victory for our God.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain,
whose blood set us free to be people of God.
This is the feast of victory for our God.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Power, riches, wisdom, and strength,
and honor, and blessing, and glory are his.
This is the feast of victory for our God.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Sing with all the people of God,
And join in the hymn of all creation:
Blessing, honor, glory, and might
be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen.
This is the feast of victory for our God.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

For the Lamb who was slain has begun his reign.
Alleluia.
This is the feast of victory for our God.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

☞ *Righteous God, our merciful master,*

☞ **you own the earth and all its peoples, and you give us all that we have. Inspire us to
serve you with justice and wisdom, and prepare us for the joy of the day of your coming,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen!**

SPECIAL MUSIC

"Lead Me, Guide Me"
Sharmyn Thompson, soprano

Doris Akers

Zephaniah (like the prophet Amos in last week's first reading) presents the day of the LORD as one of judgment and wrath. Descriptions of the last day in the New Testament include details taken from Old Testament accounts of the day of the LORD.

⁷Be silent before the Lord GOD!
For the day of the LORD is at hand;
the LORD has prepared a sacrifice,
he has consecrated his guests.

¹²At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps,
and I will punish the people
who rest complacently on their dregs,
those who say in their hearts,
“The LORD will not do good,
nor will he do harm.”

¹³Their wealth shall be plundered,
and their houses laid waste.
Though they build houses,
they shall not inhabit them;
though they plant vineyards,
they shall not drink wine from them.

¹⁴The great day of the LORD is near,
near and hastening fast;
the sound of the day of the LORD is bitter,
the warrior cries aloud there.

¹⁵That day will be a day of wrath,
a day of distress and anguish,
a day of ruin and devastation,
a day of darkness and gloom,
a day of clouds and thick darkness,
¹⁶a day of trumpet blast and battle cry
against the fortified cities
and against the lofty battlements.

¹⁷I will bring such distress upon people
that they shall walk like the blind;
because they have sinned against the LORD,
their blood shall be poured out like dust,
and their flesh like dung.

¹⁸Neither their silver nor their gold
will be able to save them
on the day of the LORD's wrath;
in the fire of his passion
the whole earth shall be consumed;

for a full, a terrible end
he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth.

Reflection

What do you remember about “the day of the Lord”? If those who are expecting the day of the Lord to be a good thing, how does Zephaniah warn them? (verse 7) When is the day of the Lord coming? (verse 14) What will the day of the Lord be like? (verses 15-16) Why will God bring distress upon the people? (verse 17) What have the people been expecting to “save” them? (verse 18) Why will it not save them? What will happen instead? As we reflect on this text in the context of the pandemic, what will save us? (for a clue, see Zephaniah 3:14-20) What I find myself longing for is to get back to “normal.” What if we never get back to normal? What if we find that God is calling us to a new reality, one that lifts up the lowly and plunges the wealthy and proud to the depths? We’re coming to that, as we approach Advent when we listen to and sing Mary’s song. (see Luke 1:46-55)

Psalm 90:1-12– read together with Bruce Taylor

- ¹Lord, you have been our refuge
from one generation to another.
- ²Before the mountains were brought forth, or the land and the earth were born,
from age to age you are God.
- ³You turn us back to the dust and say,
“Turn back, O children of earth.”
- ⁴For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past
and like a watch in the night;
- ⁵you sweep them away like a dream,
they fade away suddenly like the grass:
- ⁶in the morning it is green and flourishes;
in the evening it is dried up and withered.
- ⁷For we are consumed by your anger;
we are afraid because of your wrath.
- ⁸Our iniquities you have set before you,
and our secret sins in the light of your countenance.
- ⁹When you are angry, all our days are gone;
we bring our years to an end like a sigh.
- ¹⁰The span of our life is seventy years, perhaps in strength even eighty;
yet the sum of them is but labor and sorrow, for they pass away quickly and we are gone.
- ¹¹Who regards the power of your wrath?
Who rightly fears your indignation?
- ¹²So teach us to number our days
that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.

Reflection

If we are looking forward to returning to normal, this psalm has a warning for us. Who is God the Lord? (verses 1-2) These two verses are a brief telling of the creation story. What happens to us when God says, “Turn back!” (verse 3) One of the things I’ve heard people say, and I’ve thought myself, is, “It feels like we’ve been in this year of pandemic for years!” What does the

psalmist have to say about this? (verses 4-6) Why do we wither away? (verse 7) What happens to those things we want to keep secret? (verse 8) What if God becomes angry with us? (verses 9-11) What is our prayer in light of all of this? (verse 12) Do you think we will return to “normal”? What is normal? What is normal in God’s sight?

SECOND READING – Karen Jensen, reading

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Though we do not know and cannot calculate the day of Christ’s return, we live faithfully in the here and now as we anticipate the day when we will be given eternal salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

¹Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. ²For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. ³When they say, “There is peace and security,” then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! ⁴But you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; ⁵for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. ⁶So then let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; ⁷for those who sleep sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. ⁸But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. ⁹For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. ¹¹Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

Reflection

I think back to the beginning of this year. Our family had been with us for Christmas, and now they were returning to their normal lives. And we were returning to our normal life. As football fans, we were looking forward (we hoped!) to the Super Bowl. Jim and I were making plans for where we would take a vacation this year. And suddenly, in March, the pandemic happened, and we all feared that the quarantine and shelter in place would last for eight weeks, perhaps! (I keep track of the time in my journal, and as I write this, we are in Week 33.) Has the day of the Lord come? (verses 1-2) We felt like there was peace and security, but for many people came sudden destruction. (verse 3) Why should we not be surprised? (verse 4) What does it mean for us to “keep awake and be sober”? (verses 5-7) I don’t think it means that we should have known what was coming. But it does mean that we have resources to draw on. What are they? (verse 8) If it feels like this will last forever, what can we know for sure? (verses 9-10) How are we to care for one another in this time? (verse 11) How do you do that, and how do you experience the encouragement of others?

GOSEPL ACCLAMATION

“With a Voice of Singing”
Sharmyn Thompson, soprano

Martin Shaw

*With a voice of singing,
declare ye this and let it be heard,
Alleluia.*

GOSPEL

Matthew 25:14-30

Jesus tells a parable about his second coming, indicating that it is not sufficient merely to maintain things as they are. Those who await his return should make good use of the gifts that God has provided them.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹⁴“For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; ¹⁵to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. ¹⁶The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. ¹⁷In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. ¹⁸But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money. ¹⁹After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. ²⁰Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.’ ²¹His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’ ²²And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.’ ²³His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’ ²⁴Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; ²⁵so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.’ ²⁶But his master replied, ‘You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? ²⁷Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. ²⁸So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. ²⁹For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. ³⁰As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ ”

Reflection

What does the man who is going on a journey do with his property? (verses 14-15) What did the slaves do with the master’s property? (verses 16-17) What did the master expect, and what did the slaves do? (verses 19-23) How did the master reward them? What did the one who had received one talent do? (verses 18, 24-25) What was the master’s response? (verses 26-28) Why do you think Jesus told this story? What does it mean to you to respond to God’s grace? Does it mean we can do anything we want? What responsibility do we have because God loves us, and has made us God’s own people? Not only are we in this pandemic, we are also getting ready to figure out what comes next for us as a congregation. As we live into this new time, how will we be responsible to God for what God has given us?

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

Kris Langdon

SERMON

Rev. Keith Hohly

Refrain

Take my life, that I may be
consecrated, Lord, to thee;
take my moments and my days;
let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my hands and let them move
at the impulse of thy love;
take my feet and let them be
swift and beautiful for thee. *Refrain*

Take my silver and my gold,
not a mite would I withhold;
take my intellect and use
ev'ry pow'r as thou shalt choose. *Refrain*

Take my voice and let me sing
always, only for my King;
take my lips and let them be
filled with messages from thee. *Refrain*

Take my will and make it thine;
it shall be no longer mine;
take my heart, it is thine own;
it shall be thy royal throne. *Refrain*

PRAYER SONG

"Open Our Eyes"

Open our eyes Lord
We want to see Jesus
To reach out and touch Him
And say that we love Him
Open our ears Lord
And help us to listen
Open our eyes Lord
We want to see Jesus

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION – led by Howard and Janice Harmsen

We remember in our prayers

Myrene Bunge, Steven and Katie Newman (Dave Newman's son & daughter-in-law), Rachael Kinney, Betty Lenander (Pastor Roger's mother), Bonnie Hall, Janet, Marge & Roy (friends of Sharmyn Thompson), Pamma Williams, Sonny Thompson, Marlene Hebb, , Scott Correa (Sharon Gray's son-in-law), Lynn Ann Flora (friend of Laurel Goforth), Kira and Kaitlyn Wall (great-nieces of Irene Wall), Andy Wilson (friend of Sharon Gray), Reed

Nelson, Nancy Reder, Dorothy Masteller, Phil Lewis, Dee Rasmussen, those affected by the wildfires in the western United States, those affected by the storms in the Gulf.

Longing for Christ's reign to come among us, we pray for the outpouring of God's power on the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

Lord of the church, ignite your people with the passion of your love. By the fire of your Holy Spirit, unify us across ministries, congregations, and denominations, and refine us to participate in your activity throughout the world. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Lord of creation, we stand in awe at the works of your hands and praise you for the beauty of nature. Bless the earth for your glory and restore its integrity where exploitation has caused ruin. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Lord of the nations, sound forth your justice in the ears of all leaders. Increase concern for those who are most vulnerable, especially as international leaders forge trade agreements and cooperate to end human rights abuses. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Lord of all in need, search out all who cry to you in distress. Scatter the heavy clouds of depression, chronic illness, unemployment, and loneliness with your radiant light. Send us as encouragement and signs of your healing. 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: Steven, Katie, Rachael, Betty, Bonnie, Janet, Marge, Roy, Pamma, Sonny, Marlene, Scott, Lynn Ann, Keira, Andy, Reed, Nancy, Dorothy, Phil, Dee, those affected by the wildfires in the western United States, those affected by the storms in the Gulf, and those we name aloud or silently in our hearts. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Lord of the stranger, stir up holy restlessness in us to extend love to those at the margins. Release our desire for control and open us to learn from the perspectives of others. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Lord of the living and the dead, we give you thanks for all the saints at rest from their labors. Rouse us to live by their example, that saints yet to come may also know your love. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Receive our prayers in the name of Jesus Christ our Savior, until that day when you gather all creation around your throne where you will reign forever and ever.

Amen!

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P *Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
in whose image we are made,
who claims us and calls us beloved.*

C **Amen!**

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

P *Holy One,*

C **we confess that we are not awake for you.**

We are not faithful in using your gifts.

We forget the least of our siblings.

We do not see your beautiful image in one another.

We are infected by sin

that divides your beloved community.

Open our hearts to your coming,

open our eyes to see you in our neighbor,

open our hands to serve your creation. Amen!

P *Beloved, we are God's children,
and Jesus, our Beloved, opens the door to us.
Through † Jesus you are forgiven,
by Jesus you are welcome,
in Jesus you are called to rejoice!
Let us live in the promises prepared for us
from the foundation of 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”

pg. 207

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest, 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

P *There is a place for you at the banquet. Come and feast at Jesus' table. 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.*

A Amen!

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P *Lord Jesus,*

A **in this simple meal you have set a banquet. Sustain us on the journey, strengthen us to care for the least of your beloved children, and give us glad and generous hearts as we meet you on the way. Amen!**

BENEDICTION

P *May the God of all creation,
in whose image we are made,
who claims us and calls us beloved,
who strengthens us for service,
give you reason to rejoice and be glad!
The blessing of God,
Sovereign, \dagger Savior, and Spirit,
be with you today and always.*

A Amen!

SENDING SONG

"We Are Marching"

**We are marching in the light of God,
we are marching in the light of God.
We are marching in the light of God,
we are marching in the light of God.
We are marching,
we are marching in the light of God.
We are marching,
we are marching in the light of God.**

We are dancing in the light of God,
we are dancing in the light of God.
We are dancing in the light of God,
we are dancing in the light of God.
We are dancing,
we are dancing in the light of God.
We are dancing,
we are dancing in the light of God.

We are praying in the light of God,
we are praying in the light of God.
We are praying in the light of God,
we are praying in the light of God.
We are praying,
we are praying in the light of God.
We are praying,
we are praying in the light of God.

We are singing in the light of God,
we are singing in the light of God.
We are singing in the light of God,
we are singing in the light of God.
We are singing,
we are singing in the light of God.
We are singing,
we are singing in the light of God.

DISMISSAL – Jeff Langdon

☞ *Go in peace. Serve the Lord.*

☞ **Thanks be to God!**

POSTLUDE

“God Be With You ‘Til We Meet Again”

Sharon Gray, piano

arr. Mark Hayes

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:

"O Zion, Haste" ELW #668 | Text: Mary A. Thomson, 1834-1923

© Words: Public Domain

All rights reserved. Used by permission. Augsburg Fortress License #SAS0015552

"Take My Life, That I May Be" ELW #583 | Text: Frances R. Havergal, 1836-1879

© Words: Public Domain | Music © 1999 Augsburg Fortress.

All rights reserved. Used by permission. Augsburg Fortress License #SAS0015552

"Open Our Eyes, Lord" | CCLI Song # 1572 | Bob Cull

© 1976 CCCM Music (Admin. by Brentwood-Benson Music Publishing, Inc.)

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

Used by permission. CCLI License # 1206797

"We Are Marching" | CCLI Song # 320947 | Anders Nyberg | Andrew Maries

© 1987, 1991 Sovereign Music UK

Remaining portion is unaffiliated

For use solely with the SongSelect® Terms of Use. All rights reserved. www.ccli.com

Used by permission. 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