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## 15th Sunday after Pentecost September 13, 2020

*In today's second reading Paul questions why we judge one another, since we all stand before the judgment of God. Yet we do sin against one another, and Jesus' challenge that we forgive seventy-seven times reveals God's boundless mercy. When we hear the words of forgiveness in worship and sign ourselves with the cross, we are renewed in baptism to be signs of reconciliation in the world.*



# GATHERING

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### \*CALL TO WORSHIP

Teach me your way, O Lord, that I may walk in your truth; united our hearts to revere your name. We give thanks to you with our whole heart, and we glorify your name together forever.

Help us to teach our children, and our children's children, to meditate on your instruction and give praise to your name. Help us to teach them through words and actions what it means to follow your Son and embrace the grace you bestowed on us through him.

Happy are those who follow the ways of the Lord.  
God's ways are just and merciful.

Those who follow God's ways are continually nourished in faith.  
In all that they do, they prosper.

Come, let us open our heart to God's compassionate love.  
Let us celebrate God's mercy and justice.

## GATHERING SONG

*In Christ Alone*  
*Elena Kuehner & Cassidy Hudson*

### \*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, the strength of our ancestors, the builder of the city that is to come.

**Amen.**

Trusting in the mercy of God, let us confess our sin.

God our helper, we confess the many ways we have failed to live as your disciples. We have not finished what we began. We have feasted with friends but ignored strangers. We have been captivated by our possessions. Lift our burdens, gracious God. Refresh our

hearts and forgive our sin. Raise us to the new life you have chosen for us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

There is rejoicing in heaven when sinners repent. Put your trust in these promises; God will never leave you or forsake you. You who were lost have been found. For the sake + of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Rejoice with the angels at this good news. Amen.

### **\*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.**

### **HYMN OF PRAISE— Psalm 103:1-7**

<sup>1</sup>Bless the LORD, O my soul,  
and all that is within me, bless God's holy name.

<sup>2</sup>Bless the LORD, O my soul,  
and forget not all God's benefits—

<sup>3</sup>who forgives all your sins  
and heals all your diseases;

<sup>4</sup>who redeems your life from the grave  
and crowns you with steadfast love and mercy;

<sup>5</sup>who satisfies your desires with good things  
so that your youth is renewed like an eagle's.

<sup>6</sup>O LORD, you provide vindication  
and justice for all who are oppressed.

<sup>7</sup>You made known your ways to Moses  
and your works to the children of Israel.

### **PRESENTATION OF BIBLES**

Preschoolers receiving Bibles today: **Alexandra Dam**

3rd Graders receiving Bibles today: **Avery Miller**

Receive this Bible. Hear God’s word with us. Learn and tell its stories. Discover its mysteries. Honor its commandments. Rejoice in its good news. May God’s life-giving word inspire you and make you wise.

## PRESENTATION OF MILESTONES

### WORD

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.*

#### FIRST READING:

**Genesis 50:15-21**

<sup>15</sup>Realizing 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?” <sup>16</sup>So they approached Joseph, saying, “Your father gave this instruction before he died, <sup>17</sup>‘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. <sup>18</sup>Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, “We are here as your slaves.” <sup>19</sup>But Joseph said to them, “Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? <sup>20</sup>Even 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. <sup>21</sup>So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones.” In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

#### PSALM 103:8-13

<sup>8</sup>LORD, you are full of compassion and mercy,  
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love;

<sup>9</sup>you will not always accuse us,  
nor will you keep your anger forever.

<sup>10</sup>You have not dealt with us according to our sins,  
nor repaid us according to our iniquities.

<sup>11</sup>For as the heavens are high above the earth,  
so great is your steadfast love for those who fear you.

<sup>12</sup>As far as the east is from the west,  
so far have you removed our transgressions from us.

<sup>13</sup>As a father has compassion for his children,  
so you have compassion for those who fear you, O LORD.

**SECOND READING:**

**Romans 14:1-12**

<sup>1</sup>Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. <sup>2</sup>Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. <sup>3</sup>Those 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. <sup>4</sup>Who 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.

<sup>5</sup>Some 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. <sup>6</sup>Those 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.

<sup>7</sup>We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. <sup>8</sup>If 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. <sup>9</sup>For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

<sup>10</sup>Why 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. <sup>11</sup>For it is written,

“As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,  
and every tongue shall give praise to God.”

<sup>12</sup>So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

**\*GOSPEL:**

**Matthew 18:21-35**

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>21</sup>Peter 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?” <sup>22</sup>Jesus said to him, “Not seven

times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

<sup>23</sup>“For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. <sup>24</sup>When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; <sup>25</sup>and, 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. <sup>26</sup>So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ <sup>27</sup>And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. <sup>28</sup>But 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.’ <sup>29</sup>Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ <sup>30</sup>But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. <sup>31</sup>When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. <sup>32</sup>Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. <sup>33</sup>Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ <sup>34</sup>And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. <sup>35</sup>So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## **SERMON**

### **HYMN OF THE DAY**

*10,000 Reasons*  
*Elena Kuehner & Cassidy Hudson*

### **A PRAYER OF DEDICATION FOR TEACHERS AND VOLUNTEERS**

Eternal God, who is mighty in power but tender in love; we humbly seek to teach the children of this congregation of your glory and your redemption. Help us to remember your strength, instead of our own weakness. Strengthen us so we may teach in the light of your promise, rather than from the darkness of our frailties.

As we gather before you, we dedicate ourselves to the task you have set before us. We pray for a new power, a greater skill, and a deeper love of teachings, so that we may truly reach the hearts of these, your children. Give us an understanding of these young souls, a comprehension of their needs and a revelation of your Holy Spirit. Infect us with a joy of

our work, and remind us that as we teach, you teach with us. Give us the words to say and the thoughts to share. May all our teaching bring glory to your wonderful name; for we pray in the name of the Great Teacher, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## **A PRAYER FOR LEARNERS**

Gracious God, as we gather today, we remember our role as learners and seekers of the faith. We give thanks for all those who support the teaching and learning that takes place through our congregation. Be with all — children, and adults — who will be participating this year in our faith formation groups. Bless our times of study so that we may grow in faith. Bless our times of fellowship so that we may truly live as brothers and sisters in Christ. Bless our times of prayer and worship so that we may be enriched in our spirits. **Amen.**

## **A PRAYER FOR THE CONGREGATION**

O God, you have created us as human beings who mature from infancy, through childhood and adolescence into adulthood. Today we celebrate that growth. We lift up all who move this day into new classes for learning and spiritual growth. We pray for all who teach our children and youth. We pray for all of our congregation's classes and groups in which we mature in faith. Keep each child and youth and adult in your care. And keep us ever mindful of the promise we make each time we baptize another in faith; That we will assist them to grow in knowledge, in spiritual practices, and in living as disciples of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

## **INSTALLATION OF TEACHERS AND VOLUNTEERS**

### **\*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.**

\*Or, “he descended into hell,” another translation of this text in widespread use.

## **\*PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

### **\*PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

## **MEAL**

*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.*

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.*

## **GREAT THANKSGIVING**

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The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

### **\*PREFACE**

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. You reveal your glory as the glory of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit: equal in majesty, undivided in splendor, one Lord, one God, ever to be adored in your eternal glory. 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:

### **\*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 for the 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 for the remembrance of me.

### **\*LORD'S PRAYER**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

### **COMMUNION**

#### **\*PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

God of the welcome table, in this meal we have feasted on your goodness and have been united by your presence among us. Empower us to go forth sustained by these gifts so that we may share your neighborly love with all, through Jesus Christ, the giver of abundant life.

**Amen.**

### **SENDING**

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

## SENDING SONG

*Great Is Thy Faithfulness*  
*Elena Kuehner & Cassidy Hudson*

## BLESSING

Guard the good treasure entrusted to you, with the help of the Holy Spirit living in us. Almighty God + bless you with grace, mercy and peace, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## DISMISSAL

Washed in the remembrance of our baptismal promises and fed with Christ's holy meal, go in peace to love and serve the world. Live in love as Christ loved us.

**Thanks be to God.**

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