



**THE 15<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, LECTIONARY 24, SEPT.  
20, 2020**

*Welcome to worship! We are one family of faith even as we worship in-house and wherever we are sheltering in place. Let us gather together in heart and spirit, encouraging, praying and caring for one another.*

*Today's readings are brimful with compassion – and warning! Joseph's brothers stood before him, knowing they had wronged him. They expected and deserved punishment. The community at Rome was nitpicking and judging one another to the point of division. Peter wanted to know: what are the limits to forgiveness?*

*When we hold on to anger, when we make judgement our lens we are not living to the Lord. "Am I in the place of God?" Joseph asks his brothers. When we see one another is it with eyes of mercy, or of judgement? There's a warning in each reading that gives us pause: are we putting ourselves in the place of God?*

**GATHERING**

Announcements and time for prayer and preparation.

**CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION**

In the name of the Father, and of the + Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit C **Amen.**

Let us pray *Silence for reflection* Almighty God,  
to whom all hearts are open,  
all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid:  
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts  
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,  
that we may perfectly love you  
and worthily magnify your holy name,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. C **Amen.**

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

*Silence for reflection*

Gracious God,

**have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

God hears the cries of all who call out in need,  
and through his death and resurrection, Christ has made us his own.  
As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by His authority,  
I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins,  
in the name of the Father + Son and Holy Spirit.  
Live in freedom and peace to do God's work in the world. **Amen.**

#### GREETING

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

Let us pray: - *Silence*- O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**



#### *The Readings*

The first reading is from Genesis, the 50<sup>th</sup> chapter.

<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. The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

### *Silence for Reflection*

The second reading is from Romans, the 14<sup>th</sup> chapter.

<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.

The Word of the Lord! **Thanks be to God!**

*The Gospel Matthew 18:21-35 is offered*

Bless the LORD, O my soul,

and all that is within me, bless God’s holy name.

**Who redeems us, and crowns us with steadfast love and mercy**

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the 18<sup>th</sup> chapter.

**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>Shouldn’t you 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 our Lord! **Praise to you, O Christ!**

Teaching the Word/Sermon

## CONFESSION OF FAITH & PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

In confidence and trust, let us confess our faith:

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.**

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit  
and born of the virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

**He descended into hell.**

**On the third day he rose again.**

**He ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again 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**

## PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Sustained by the promised hope of healing and new life, we join our voices and prayers with God's people in all times and places in praying for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

*A brief silence.*

You welcome us when we struggle, and our faith is weak. Teach us we live to you. Form this congregation into a place of mercy for one another and for all our neighbors. Strengthen faith through Bible reading and studies, through prayer and forgiveness so we can live out your Gospel in our families and community. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O God, we continue in a season of unrest and turmoil, and our communities are divided and struggling. Open our eyes where they have been clouded with bias and

prejudice, and we have been blind. Strengthen our hearts to see one another with your love and care. Make us one as we seek the good of our nation and neighbor. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

The heights of the heavens show us the vastness of your steadfast love. Have compassion on the world you have gifted us. Where human selfishness has brought damage and destruction, we look to your guidance to live and love in ways that heal, renew, and redeem creation. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Make your ways known to the nations. Speak kindness to our bitter grudges. Settle our hearts when we want to settle accounts with violence. Bless our leaders with patience and wisdom, and lead them to seek the good of your peoples where they govern. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Bring healing and justice wherever harm is dealt. Provide vindication for all who are oppressed. Free victims of human trafficking and forced labor; deliver all who are bound by debt. Feed all who hunger, and guard refugees fleeing famine, poverty, and war. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Teach us to forgive. Still our tongues when we are tempted to pass judgment and argue over opinions. Make us and this congregation a community of mercy for one another and for all our neighbors. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Be with our country as we enter a season of election. Help us to speak peace, choose wisely, and seek the good of our neighbor as we do our own. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Help us share the burdens of those weighed down by illness and need, and all those whose needs we bring before you:

all who need medical treatment from any and every cause,  
and those unable to receive care...

all who mourn, living with by fear and loss and grief...

families working to meet the needs of work and home...

those struggling and anxious for health in body, mind and finances....

Hear our needs, and the needs known only to You. Be our strength to meet the days ahead. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**

Whether we live or whether we die, we are yours. especially John Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople, and those we love who rest in you, whom we remember today *-Silence-*. We thank you for those who have showed us faithfulness, for the knees that taught us how to bow to you and the tongues that taught us to praise you Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

In the certain hope that nothing can separate us from your love, we offer these prayers to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Peace of the Lord be with you always! **And also with you!**

*Pause to share Peace and offer thanks for God's gifts that sustain and bless us. If you wish, offer thanks a loud for blessings received, something or someone for whom you are grateful. Offerings can be made online by going to the website [christpipersville.org](http://christpipersville.org), using the QR code with your smartphone, or mailed. We are grateful for your continuing support of our mission and ministry!*



*Then continue:*

Let us pray. *Silence* God of mercy and grace,  
**the eyes of all wait upon you, and you open your hand in blessing. Fill us with good things at your table, that we may come to the help of all in need, through Jesus Christ, our redeemer and Lord. Amen.**

*A Brief Silence*

Praise and thanks to you, holy God,  
for by your Word you made all things:  
you spoke light into darkness,  
called forth beauty from chaos,  
and brought life into being.  
For your Word of life, O God,  
**We give you thanks and praise.**

By your Word you called your people Israel  
to tell of your wonderful gifts:  
freedom from captivity, water on the desert journey,  
a pathway home from exile, wisdom for life with you.  
For your Word of life, O God,  
**We give you thanks and praise.**

Through Jesus, your Word made flesh,  
you speak to us and call us to witness:  
forgiveness through the cross,  
life to those entombed by death,  
the way of your self-giving love.  
For your Word of life, O God,  
**We give you thanks and praise.**

Faithful to your Word, O God, draw near to all who call on you;  
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord,  
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,  
be honor and glory forever. **Amen.**

Let us pray in the words 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.**

The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,  
so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

The God of all grace + bless us now and forever. **Amen.**

**DISMISSAL**

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

*We give thanks to God that we are able to gather in-house and wherever we are sheltering in place, and for your faithful support as we move forward serving one another and out community.*

POSTLUDE

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*Sundays & Seasons SB125957*

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