

**THE 17<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, LECTIONARY 26, 2020**  
**SEPTEMBER 27, 2020**



*In the reading from Ezekiel the people claim the ways of the Lord are unfair, while God offers repentance and new life. Paul urges us to look to Christ as a model of humility, putting the interests of others above our own. Jesus' parable about two sons who choose a new path reveals surprises in the reign of God. Nourished by Word and Prayer, we offer our lives for the sake of our needy world.*

*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.*

**GATHERING**

Announcements and time for prayer and preparation.

**CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION**

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

P 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.

Faithful God, **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.**

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*- God of love, giver of life, you know our frailties and failings.  
Give us your grace to overcome them, keep us from those things that harm us, and  
guide us in the way of salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**



#### *The Readings*

The first reading is from Ezekiel.

<sup>1</sup>The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>2</sup>What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, “The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge”? <sup>3</sup>As I live, says the Lord GOD, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. <sup>4</sup>Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins that shall die.

<sup>25</sup>Yet you say, “The way of the Lord is unfair.” Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? <sup>26</sup>When the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed they shall die. <sup>27</sup>Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. <sup>28</sup>Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. <sup>29</sup>Yet the house of Israel says, “The way of the Lord is unfair.” O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair?

<sup>30</sup>Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways,

says the Lord GOD. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin.

<sup>31</sup>Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? <sup>32</sup>For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord GOD. Turn, then, and live. The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

*Silence for Reflection*

*We read the Psalm responsively. The congregation's response in in **Bold** type.*

<sup>1</sup>To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.

<sup>2</sup>**My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be put to shame,  
nor let my enemies triumph over me.**

<sup>3</sup>Let none who look to you be put to shame;  
rather let those be put to shame who are treacherous.

<sup>4</sup>**Show me your ways, O LORD, and teach me your paths.**

<sup>5</sup>Lead me in your truth and teach me,  
for you are the God of my salvation;  
in you have I trusted all the day long.

<sup>6</sup>**Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love,  
for they are from everlasting.**

<sup>7</sup>Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions;  
remember me according to your steadfast love  
and for the sake of your goodness, O LORD.

<sup>8</sup>**You are gracious and upright, O LORD;  
therefore you teach sinners in your way.**

<sup>9</sup>You lead the lowly in justice  
and teach the lowly your way. **ALL: Amen.**

The second reading is from Philippians.

<sup>1</sup>If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, <sup>2</sup>make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. <sup>3</sup>Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. <sup>4</sup>Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. <sup>5</sup>Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

<sup>6</sup>who, though he was in the form of God,  
did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited,

<sup>7</sup>but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave,  
being born in human likeness.

And being found in human form,

<sup>8</sup>he humbled himself

and became obedient to the point of death - even death on a cross.

<sup>9</sup>Therefore God also highly exalted him

and gave him the name that is above every name,

<sup>10</sup>so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend,

in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

<sup>11</sup>and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,

to the glory of God the Father.

<sup>12</sup>Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; <sup>13</sup>for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure. The Word of the Lord! **Thanks be to God!**

Alleluia. At the name of Jesus every knee should bend,

**And every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, Alleluia.**

*The Gospel, Matthew 21:23-32 is offered.*

<sup>23</sup>When [Jesus] entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?" <sup>24</sup>Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. <sup>25</sup>Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" And they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?'" <sup>26</sup>But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet." <sup>27</sup>So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

<sup>28</sup>"What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' <sup>29</sup>He answered, 'I will not'; but later he changed his mind and went. <sup>30</sup>The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir'; but he did not go. <sup>31</sup>Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. <sup>32</sup>For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him." 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.*

In all the world, give your church unity. Inspire all the baptized with the mind of Christ. Where the church is powerful and where it struggles, shape us with humility and obedience so that your love may be at work in us. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Turn this congregation toward the interests of others. Fill us with your compassion and sympathy. Bless our mission and ministries, and inspire us to look for new and creative ways to stay connected, caring for one another. Make us into signs of your mercy and justice for our neighbors. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Your Son took on all of bodily life in our world, even to death. Preserve and keep your creation, O God. Mend and redeem places that are polluted and damaged, so that all of creation confesses you as Lord. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Turn the nations toward life. Where our ways are unfair, give us new hearts and new spirits. Where sin permeates our cultures and institutions, change our hearts and teach us to trust your wisdom and authority. 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. Hear our prayers for all yearning for healing, longing for justice, 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 fear and loss and grief...

families stressed and 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**

Thank you for those who have gone into the kingdom ahead of us. By their witness, teach us to confess Jesus Christ as Lord in life and in death. 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!**

*Please offer contact-free greetings of peace: wave, bow, curtsey, place a hand over your heart. Then we 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 from your living Word 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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