



Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 27, 2020

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

Jesus' parable about two sons who don't do what they say reveals surprises in the reign of God. 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. Nourished by the broken bread and shared cup, we offer our lives for the sake of our needy world.

WELCOME TO WORSHIP

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

A bowl of water may be placed on a table as you read the Thanksgiving. You may make the sign of the cross, a sign marked at baptism, on your forehead, on your lips and on your heart.

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

Amen.

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness. Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

Water is poured into the font.

We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters and by your Word you created the world, calling forth life in which you took delight.

Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family.

Through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom.

At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit.

By water and your Word you claim us as daughters and sons, making us heirs of your promise and servants of all.

We praise you for the gift of water that sustains life, and above all we praise you for the gift of new life in Jesus Christ. Shower us with your Spirit, and renew our lives with your forgiveness, grace, and love.

To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

Amen.

HYMN

“Voices Raised to You”

Please either sing the hymn or pray the verse speaking out loud.

**Voices raised to you we offer; tune them, God, for songs of praise.
Hearts and hands we bring in tribute for your gifts through all our days.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Triune God, to you we sing!**

**All creation joins to praise you; earth and sky your works display.
Art and music, gifts you lend us, we return to you today.
Alleluia! Alleluia! God, creator, source of life!**

**Christ, the song of love incarnate, touching earth with heaven's grace,
for your living, suff'ring, dying, for your rising, hear our praise!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Christ, redeemer, Lord of life!**

**Spirit, flaming through creation, kindle faith within each heart.
Lift our voices high in chorus; through our hands your love impart.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Spirit, helper, breath of life!**

**How can any praise we offer measure all the thanks we owe?
Take our hearts and hands and voices — gifts of love we can bestow.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Triune God, to you we sing!**

Text: Herman G. Stuempfle Jr., b. 1923
Text © 1997 GIA Publications Inc. 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358.
All rights reserved. Used by permission.
One License.net A-708655 and CCLI #2746232.

GREETING & PRAYER OF THE DAY

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.

Let us pray ... 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.

FIRST READING: Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

Ezekiel challenges those who think they cannot change because of what their parents were and did, or who think they cannot reverse their own previous behavior. God insistently invites people to turn and live.

The word of the LORD came to me: 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"? As I live, says the Lord GOD, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. 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.

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? 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. Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. 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?

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. 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? For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord GOD. Turn, then, and live.

Word of God. Word of life.

Thanks be to God.

(silence)

PSALM 25:1-9

To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.

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

Let none who look to you be put to shame;

rather let those be put to shame who are treacherous.

Show me your ways, O LORD, and teach me your paths.

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.

Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love, for they are from everlasting.

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.

You are gracious and upright, O LORD; therefore you teach sinners in your way.

You lead the lowly in justice and teach the lowly your way.

(silence)

SECOND READING: Philippians 2:1-13

As part of a call for harmony rather than self-seeking, Paul uses a very early Christian hymn that extols the selflessness of Christ in his obedient death on the cross. Christ's selfless perspective is to be the essential perspective we share as the foundation for Christian accord.

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death— even death on a cross.

Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

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; for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Word of God. Word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

“Change My Heart, O God”

Please either sing the hymn or pray the verse speaking out loud.

**Change my heart, O God; make it ever true.
Change my heart, O God; may I be like you.
You are the potter; I am the clay.
Mold me and make me; this is what I pray.
Change my heart, O God; make it ever true.
Change my heart, O God; may I be like you.**

Text: Eddie Espinosa, b. 1953

Text © 1982 Mercy/Vineyard Publishing, admin. Music Services

One License.net A-708655 and CCLI #2746232.

GOSPEL: Matthew 21:23-32

After driving the moneychangers out of the temple (21:12), Jesus begins teaching there. His authority is questioned by the religious leaders, who are supposed to be in charge of the temple.

The Gospel of Matthew, the twenty-first chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

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?" 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. 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?' But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet." 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.

"What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' He answered, 'I will not'; but later he changed his mind and went. The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir'; but he did not go. 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. 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 the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

HOMILY

HYMN

"Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service"

Please either sing the hymn or pray the verse speaking out loud.

**Lord, whose love in humble service bore the weight of human need,
who upon the cross, forsaken, worked your mercy's perfect deed:
we, your servants, bring the worship not of voice alone, but heart;
consecrating to your purpose ev'ry gift which you impart.**

**Still your children wander homeless; still the hungry cry for bread;
still the captives long for freedom; still in grief we mourn our dead.
As you, Lord, in deep compassion healed the sick and freed the soul,
by your Spirit send your power to our world to make it whole.**

**As we worship, grant us vision, till your love's revealing light
in its height and depth and greatness dawns upon our quickened sight,
making known the needs and burdens your compassion bids us bear,
stirring us to ardent service, your abundant life to share.**

**Called by worship to your service, forth in your dear name we go,
to the child, the youth, the aged, love in living deeds to show;
hope and health, good will and comfort, counsel, aid and peace we give,
that your servants, Lord, in freedom may your mercy know and live.**

Text: Albert F. Bayly, 1901-1984
Text © 1961 Oxford University Press.
One License.net A-708655 and CCLI #2746232.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Drawn together in the compassion of God, we pray for the church, the world, and all those 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.

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 minds and teach us to trust your authority. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Our lives are yours, O God. Relieve the suffering of those who are ill in body, mind, or spirit. Defend the lives and welfare of children who are abused or neglected, hungry or exploited, bullied or lonely. Be the strength of those who are sick and bring your healing, especially we remember, Karen, Velma, Nanette, Bill & Tami, and John & Sandy. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Turn this congregation away from our own interests toward the interests of others. Fill us with your compassion and sympathy. Bless ministries of care in our community; make us into signs of your mercy and justice for our neighbors. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Thank you for those who have gone into the kingdom ahead of us— tax collectors and prostitutes, likely and unlikely, obedient and slow to learn. By their witness, teach us to confess Jesus Christ as Lord in life and in death. 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.

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered as one in Christ, 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.

BENEDICTION

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine upon you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

Amen.

HYMN

"Here I Am, Lord"

Please either sing the hymn or pray the verse speaking out loud.

"I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my people cry.

All who dwell in dark and sin my hand will save.

I, who made the stars of night, I will make their darkness bright.

Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?"

Refrain

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you calling in the night.

I will go, Lord, if you lead me. I will hold your people in my heart.

"I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my people's pain.

I have wept for love of them. They turn away.

I will break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love alone.

I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send?" *Refrain*

"I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame.

I will set a feast for them. My hand will save.

Finest bread I will provide till their hearts be satisfied.

I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send?" *Refrain*

Text: Daniel L. Schutte, b. 1946

Text © 1981 OCP Publications, Inc., 5536 NE Hassalo, Portland, OR 97213. All rights reserved. Used by permission.
One License.net A-708655 and CCLI #2746232.

DISMISSAL

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

