



Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 6, 2020

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

Conflict is a part of relationships and life in community. Jesus' words in today's gospel are often used in situations having to do with church discipline. The prophet Ezekiel tells of warning

the wicked to turn from their ways, and Paul reminds us that love is the fulfilling of the law. We gather in the name of Christ, assured that he is present among us with gifts of peace and reconciliation.

WELCOME TO WORSHIP

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism.

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

“Built on a Rock”

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

**Built on a rock the church shall stand, even when steeples are falling;
crumbled have spires in ev'ry land, bells still are chiming and calling—
calling the young and old to rest, calling the souls of those distressed,
longing for life everlasting.**

**Christ builds a house of living stones: we are his own habitation;
he fills our hearts, his humble thrones, granting us life and salvation.
Where two or three will seek his face, he in their midst will show his grace,
blessings upon them bestowing.**

**Through all the passing years, O Lord, grant that, when church bells are ringing,
many may come to hear your Word, who here this promise is bringing:
"I know my own, my own know me; you, not the world, my face shall see;
my peace I leave with you. Amen."**

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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 ... O Lord God, enliven and preserve your church with your perpetual mercy. Without your help, we mortals will fail; remove far from us everything that is harmful, and lead us toward all that gives life and salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

FIRST READING: Ezekiel 33:7-11

God appointed Ezekiel as a sentinel for the house of Israel. Ezekiel must faithfully convey God's warnings to the people. Remarkably, God—who is about to attack Jerusalem—gives a warning with the hope that repentance will make the attack unnecessary.

So you, mortal, I have made a sentinel for the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. If I say to the wicked, “O wicked ones, you shall surely die,” and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but their blood I will require at your hand. But if you warn the wicked to turn from their ways, and they do not turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but you will have saved your life.

Now you, mortal, say to the house of Israel, Thus you have said: "Our transgressions and our sins weigh upon us, and we waste away because of them; how then can we live?" Say to them, As I live, says the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from their ways and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel?

Word of God. Word of life.

Thanks be to God.

(silence)

PSALM 119:33-40

Teach me, O LORD, the way of your statutes, and I shall keep it to the end.

Give me understanding, and I shall keep your teaching; I shall keep it with all my heart.

Lead me in the path of your commandments, for that is my desire.

Incline my heart to your decrees and not to unjust gain.

Turn my eyes from beholding falsehood; give me life in your way.

Fulfill your promise to your servant, which is for those who fear you.

Turn away the reproach that I dread, because your judgments are good.

Behold, I long for your commandments; by your righteousness enliven me.

(silence)

SECOND READING: Romans 13:8-14

The obligation of Christians is to love one another and so fulfill the heart and goal of the law. Clothes make the person as we "put on the Lord Jesus Christ" and live today in light of the future God has in store for us.

Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet"; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, "Love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.

Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

Word of God. Word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

**Halle, halle, hallelujah! Halle, halle, hallelujah! Halle, halle, hallelujah!
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!**

GOSPEL: Matthew 18:15-20

Jesus offers practical advice to his disciples on how individuals—and the church as a whole—should go about restoring relationships when one member has sinned against another.

The Gospel of Matthew, the eighteenth chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus said to the disciples: “If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

HOMILY

HYMN

“Lord of All Nations, Grant Me Grace”

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

**Lord of all nations, grant me grace to love all people, ev’ry race;
And in each person may I see my kindred, loved, redeemed by thee.**

**Breakdown the wall that would divide thy children, Lord on ev’ry side.
My neighbor’s good let me pursue; let Christian love bind warm and true.**

**Forgive me, Lord, where I have erred by loveless act and thoughtless word.
Make me to see the wrong I have do will crucify my Lord anew.**

**Give me thy courage, Lord, to speak whenever strong oppress the weak.
Should I myself the victim be, help me forgive, rememb’ring thee.**

**With thine own love may I be filled and by thy Holy Spirit willed,
That all I touch, where're I be, may be divinely touched by thee.**

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.

Unite your church, O God. Grant us the gifts of repentance and reconciliation. Bless the cooperative work of churches in this community. Strengthen ecumenical partnerships; guide the work of the Lutheran World Federation and the World Council of Churches. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Protect your creation, O God. Teach us ways that do not harm what you have entrusted to our care. Renew and enliven places suffering from drought, flood, storms, or pollution, especially Louisiana and eastern Texas as they recover from the hurricane, and California and other states as the fires continue to burn. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Turn nations and leaders from ways that lead to death. Shape new paths toward peace and cooperation, teaching us to recognize one another as neighbors. Guide legislators, civil servants, judges, and police toward laws that protect the well-being of all, and help us reform the torrents of violence and destruction into rivers of change and wells of justice and peace. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Tend to all in need of your compassion. Hear the cries of those awaiting justice and those yearning for forgiveness. Give community to the lonely and neighbors to the outcast. Shelter all who are vulnerable in body, mind, or spirit, especially Erika, Karen, John & Sandy, Michelle, Harry and Peggy. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Sustain us in our work, O God, and give work to those who need it. Shape societies to ensure fair treatment for all who labor. Help us to love our neighbors in and through our work. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

We remember with thanksgiving those who have died in faith. As you equipped them, equip us with your protection and power, until with them we see your salvation. 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

"On Eagle's Wings"

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

**You who dwell in the shelter of the Lord, who abide in this shadow for life,
say to the Lord: "My refuge, my rock in whom I trust!"**

Refrain

***And he will raise you up on eagle's wings, bear you on the breath of dawn,
make you to shine like the sun, and hold you in the palm of his hand.***

**The snare of the fowler will never capture you, and famine will bring you no fear;
under God's wings your refuge, with faithfulness your shield. *Refrain***

**You need not fear the terror of the night, nor the arrow that flies by day;
though thousands fall about you, near you it shall not come. *Refrain***

**For to the angels God's given a command to guard you in all of your ways;
upon their hands they will bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.**

Final refrain

***And he will raise you up on eagle's wings, bear you on the breath of dawn,
make you to shine like the sun, and hold you in the palm of his hand;
and hold you, hold you in the palm of his hand.***

Text: Michael Joncas, b. 1957

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DISMISSAL

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