



Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Greenville

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 26 and 27, 2020

Welcome in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ! If you come as a visitor today, we hope you will leave as a friend. We count it a privilege and a blessing to have you with us in worship. If you are not presently a member of any congregation, please feel welcome to gather with us around Jesus in this community of his disciples at Holy Trinity. Come and worship with us again!

Invitation to Communion: Holy Communion is the body and blood of Jesus Christ by which our Lord is truly present to forgive sin and bring life and salvation. All baptized Christians who believe this promise are welcome to commune. Parents with children are encouraged to come to the altar together. Children who do not yet receive communion will receive the blessing of the Church from the Pastor.

Procedure for Communing: We will be using a form of processional communion. An usher will release each pew to come forward at a time to avoid a long line in the aisle. Pick up a communion cup on either side at the first pew. The pastor will place a host in your open palm. Turn to either the left or right side to the deacon or communion assistant to receive wine. After consuming the host and wine, pour any remaining wine into the container, then discard your cup. Children who have not yet received their First Holy Communion should come forward for a blessing. Please maintain social distance between non-family members.

Gluten-free wafers are available; let Pastor know when you come forward to receive.

Service of Holy Communion

Significance of the Day: 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.

Gathering

Prelude Hymn Variations on *Martyrdom and King's Weston* (Meyer et al)

Confession

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who creates, redeems, and sustains us and all of creation.
Amen.

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

(Silence is kept for reflection.)

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.
Hear the truth that God proclaims:
Your sins are forgiven in the name of † Jesus Christ.
Led by the Holy Spirit, live in freedom and newness
to do God's work in the world.
Amen.

Opening Hymn

O Master, Let Me Walk with You

(Please be seated. We will not be singing but these words are here for your reflection.)

O Master, let me walk with you
in lowly paths of service true;
tell me your secret; help me bear
the strain of toil, the fret of care.

Help me the slow of heart to move
by some clear, winning word of love;
teach me the wayward feet to stay,
and guide them in the homeward way.

Teach me your patience; share with me
a closer, dearer company,
in work that keeps faith sweet and strong,
in trust that triumphs over wrong,

In hope that sends a shining ray
far down the future's broad'ning way,
in peace that only you can give;
with you, O Master, let me live.

(The assembly stands.)

Apostolic 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.

Prayer of the Day

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.

(The assembly sits.)

Word

First Reading

Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

A reading from Ezekiel:

1 The word of the Lord came to me: 2 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”? 3 As I live, says the Lord God, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. 4 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.

25 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? 26 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. 27 Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. 28 Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. 29 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?

30 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. 31 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? 32 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.

Psalm 25:1-9

- 1 To you, O LORD,
I lift up my soul.
- 2 My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be put to shame,
nor let my enemies triumph over me.
- 3 Let none who look to you be put to shame;
rather let those be put to shame who are treacherous.
- 4 Show me your ways, O LORD,
and teach me your paths.
- 5 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.
- 6 Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love,
for they are from everlasting.
- 7 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.
- 8 You are gracious and upright, O LORD;
therefore you teach sinners in your way.
- 9 You lead the lowly in justice
and teach the lowly your way.

A reading from Philippians:

1 If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, ² make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³ Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. ⁴ Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. ⁵ Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,
6 who, though he was in the form of God,
 did not regard equality with God
as something to be exploited,
7 but emptied himself,
 taking the form of a slave,
 being born in human likeness.
And being found in human form,
8 he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death -
even death on a cross.
9 Therefore God also highly exalted him
and gave him the name
that is above every name,
10 so that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
11 and every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.
12 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; 13 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.

Gospel Acclamation (*The assembly stands.*)

Alleluia!

**My sheep hear my voice, says the Lord;
I know them and they follow me.**

Alleluia!

Gospel

Matthew 21:23-32

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the twenty-first chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

(The reading of the Gospel.)

23 When he 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?" 24 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. 25 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?' 26 But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet." 27 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.

28 "What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' 29 He answered, 'I will not'; but later he changed his mind and went. 30 The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir'; but he did not go. 31 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. 32 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.

(The assembly sits.)

The Sermon

Pastor Brenda Martin

(The assembly remains seated.)

Hymn of the Day

At the Name of Jesus

(We will not be singing but these words are here for your reflection.)

At the name of Jesus
ev'ry knee shall bow,
ev'ry tongue confess him
king of glory now.
It is God's good pleasure
we should call him Lord,
who from the beginning
was the mighty Word.

In your hearts enthrone him;
there let him subdue
all that is not holy,
all that is not true.
Crown him as your captain
in temptation's hour;
let his will enfold you
in its light and pow'r.

At his voice creation
sprang at once to sight,
all the angel faces,
all the hosts of light,
thrones and dominations,
stars upon their way,
all the heav'nly orders
in their great array.

Christians, this Lord Jesus
shall return again
on the clouds of glory,
with his angel train;
for all wreaths of empire
meet upon his brow,
and our hearts confess him
king of glory now.

Humbled for a season,
to receive a name
from the lips of sinners
unto whom he came,
faithfully he bore it
spotless to the last;
brought it back victorious
when from death he passed.

(The assembly stands.)

Apostles' 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.**

Prayers of Intercession

A: Drawn together in the compassion of God, we pray for the church, the world, and all those in need, responding, Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

(Brief silence)

A: 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. We pray for our bishops, Elizabeth and Michael, our pastors, musicians and all who lead. Lord in your mercy,

C. hear our prayer.

A: 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. We pray for those affected by wildfires, hurricanes and flooding. Lord in your mercy,

C. hear our prayer.

A: 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,

C. **hear our prayer.**

A: 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. We pray for those whose work risks exposing them to Covid-19. Keep them safe from harm. Lord in your mercy,

C. **hear our prayer.**

A: 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, especially our support of the Good Shepherd Center; make us into signs of your mercy and justice for our neighbors. Lord in your mercy,

C. **hear our prayer.**

A: 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,

C. **hear our prayer.**

A: Are there others for whom we should pray?

P. All these things and whatever else you see that we need, we entrust to your mercy; through Christ our Lord.

C: **Amen.**

Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

(The assembly sits.)

Meal

Music as the meal is prepared

Interlude on *Blessed Spring*

(Cherwien)

(The deacon, on behalf of the people, prays.)

Offering Prayer

Let us pray.

Gracious God, you open your hand, filling our lives with all good things and renewing the face of the earth. We offer these gifts in thanksgiving for all that we have received from your bounty. Accept them for the sake of him who offered his life for us, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Great Thanksgiving

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.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son,
who reached out to heal the sick and suffering,
who preached good news to the poor,
and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

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.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension,
we await his coming in glory.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord,
and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food,
the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord;
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,
be all honor and glory, now and forever.
Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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.**

Breaking of Bread

The gifts of God for the people of God. Come, for all is now ready.

(The assembly sits.)

Communion of the Faithful

Procedure for Communing: *We will be using a form of processional communion. An usher will release each pew to come forward at a time to avoid a long line in the aisle. Pick up a communion cup on either side at the first pew. The pastor will place a host in your open palm. Turn to either the left or right side to the deacon or communion assistant to receive wine. After consuming the host and wine, pour any remaining wine into the container, then discard your cup. Children who have not yet received their First Holy Communion should come forward for a blessing. Please maintain social distance between non-family members.*

(Following the Communion the assembly stands for the blessing.)

Post-Communion Blessing

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and preserve you unto eternal life.

Amen.

Prayer after Communion

Let us pray. God of abundance, with this bread of life and cup of salvation you have united us with Christ, making us one with all your people. Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit, that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world and continue forever in the risen life of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

Sending

Our Prayer for These Times

O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown.

Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Blessing

Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

Amen.

Dismissal

Go forth into the world to serve God with gladness;
be of good courage; hold fast to that which is good; render to no one evil
for evil;

strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak;

help the afflicted; honor all people;

love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Final

(Rawesthorne)

(Once the pastor is at the back of the church, ushers will dismiss by row.)

Serving Saturday

Presiding Minister Pastor Brenda Martin
Pianist Maidene Hackett
Liturgical Deacon Linda Armstrong

Serving Sunday

Presiding Minister Pastor Brenda Martin
Organist Maidene Hackett
Liturgical Deacon David Lineman
Communion Assistant Nancy McLaughlin
Lector Mike Balas
Head Usher Bob Massing
Altar Guild Linda Saverino

Acknowledgments

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Pastors in residence:

The Rev. Julia Fraser, chaplain at St. Paul Homes

The Rev. Dr. Robert Harris, retired, Mercyhurst University

The Rev. Brian Riddle, Thiel College Campus Pastor

The Rev. Martin Roth, retired pastor, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church

The Rev. Dr. Curtis Thompson, retired, Thiel College