

CREATED, SAVED AND GIFTED BY GOD,  
WE SEEK, SERVE AND SHARE JESUS CHRIST.



NINETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

JULY 30, 2023 - 10:30 AM

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH  
901 EAST STROOP ROAD  
KETTERING, OH 45429-4688  
(937) 298-0136

# NINETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

## *Introduction*

As Solomon prays for wisdom, we seek to more deeply know the treasures of faith. In today's gospel Jesus offers everyday images that reveal to us the reign of God: a tree that becomes a sheltering home, yeast that penetrates and expands, a treasured pearl, a net that gains a great catch. Even as we seek the riches of God's reign, the great surprise is that God's grace finds us first!

## *The Greatest of Shrubs*

Surely God's kingdom should end up sounding more impressive. Surely God can do better. Providing shelter for birds does sound like something God would do, but why can't the birds nest in a more attractive tree? A mustard seed, at its best, grows into a sort of weedy shrub. The greatest of shrubs is not that great.

Maybe that's the point. Maybe these little stories are supposed to seem a little strange. After all, God's choices often seem that way to us. God does not always value what we value. God likes small, weedy shrubs as much as big, majestic trees.

That is extremely good news for those of us who suspect we have more in common with the shrub than the tree. It is good to know that God loves both! It is good to know that God loves the mustard seeds of this world enough that God sends Jesus to be a mustard seed, to be the living proof that the kingdom of heaven is real. And the kingdom of heaven is here, because Jesus is here. And as we are filled with his Spirit, we also become living signs of that same kingdom.

After all, a God whose kingdom can be compared with something like a mustard seed is probably not going to stop short of using other unlikely things. A God like that might even decide to use people like us. So look around. What do you see? What do you see that surprises you? What do you see that you normally take for granted? What do you see that's alive? The kingdom of heaven is like that. The kingdom of heaven is even like us, right now. The kingdom of heaven may not do what we expect, or even what we want—but one way or another, the kingdom of heaven will grow.

# GATHERING

## PRELUDE

*I Love the Father*

I love the Father. I love the Holy Son.  
I love the Spirit. I love the three in one.  
He created me. redeemed and sanctified me,  
Praise Him. praise Him, praise Him, praise Him! (repeat)

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Pastor Jamie Vannoy*

## \*\* CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

*Jesus forgives us and tells us to forgive.*

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, whose steadfast love is everlasting, whose faithfulness endures from generation to generation. **Amen.**

Trusting in the mercy of God, let us confess our sin.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

**Reconciling God, we confess that we do not trust your abundance, and we deny your presence in our lives. We place our hope in ourselves and rely on our own efforts. We fail to believe that you provide enough for all. We abuse your good creation for our own benefit. We fear difference and do not welcome others as you have welcomed us. We sin in thought, word, and deed. By your grace, forgive us; through your love, renew us; and in your Spirit, lead us; so that we may live and serve you in newness of life. Amen.**

Beloved of God, by the radical abundance of divine mercy we have peace with God through Christ Jesus, through whom we have obtained grace upon grace. Our sins are forgiven. Let us live now in hope. For hope does not disappoint, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

# WORD

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.*

## FIRST READING

**Matthew 18:21-22**

A reading from the book of Matthew.

Then Peter came and said to him, "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

## \*\* HYMN

*I've Been Redeemed*

I've been redeemed (I've been redeemed)  
by the blood of the Lamb. (by the blood of the Lamb.)  
I've been redeemed (I've been redeemed)  
by the blood of the Lamb,  
I've been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb,  
saved and sanctified I am.  
All my sins are washed away,  
I've been redeemed.

I've been redeemed (I've been redeemed)  
by the blood of the Lamb. (by the blood of the Lamb.)  
I've been redeemed (I've been redeemed)  
by the blood of the Lamb,  
I've been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb,  
filled with the Holy Ghost I am.  
All my sins are washed away,  
I've been redeemed.

It's by God's grace (it's by God's grace)  
that I've been saved. (that I've been saved.)  
It's by God's grace (it's by God's grace)  
that I've been saved. (that I've been saved.)  
It's by God's grace that I've been saved.  
I have no fear on the Judgment Day.  
All my sins are washed away;  
I've been redeemed.

## HEALING

*Jesus heals those who are sick and hurt.*

## READING

**Luke 10:25-37**

A reading from the book of Luke.

Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he said, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? What do you read there?" He answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." And he said to him, "You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live." But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.' Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?" He said, "The one who showed him mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

## \*\* HYMN

*Blind Man*

Blind man sat by the road and he cried.  
Blind man sat by the road and he cried.  
Blind man sat by the road and he cried.

Oh, oh, oh,  
Show me the way,  
Show me the way,  
Show me the way,  
The way to go home.

Woman sat by the well and she cried.  
Woman sat by the well and she cried.  
Woman sat by the well and she cried.

Oh,oh,oh,  
Show me the truth,  
Show me the truth,  
Show me the truth,  
The way to go home.

We all sit by the road and we cry.  
We all sit by the road and we cry.  
We all sit by the road and we cry.  
Oh, oh, oh,  
Show us the life,  
Show us the life,  
Show us the life,  
The way to go home.

Jesus stood on the road & he cried.  
Jesus stood on the road & he cried.  
Jesus stood on the road & he cried.  
Oh, oh, oh,  
I am the way,  
I am the truth,  
I am the life,  
Follow me home.

Jesus!

## **PRAYER**

*Jesus teaches us to pray.*

## **PSALM**

**Psalm 100**

Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth.

**Worship the LORD with gladness;  
come into his presence with singing.**

Know that the LORD is God.

It is he that made us, and we are his;  
we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

**Enter his gates with thanksgiving,  
and his courts with praise.**

**Give thanks to him, bless his name.**

For the LORD is good;  
his steadfast love endures forever,  
and his faithfulness to all generations.

**\*\* LORD'S PRAYER** *(taught in American Sign Language)*

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, 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.**

**\*\* HYMN**

*Hallelujah, Praise the Lord*

Thank you, Lord, for this fine day.  
Thank you, Lord, for this fine day.  
Thank you, Lord, for this fine day.  
Right where we are.

Hallelujah, Praise the Lord!  
Hallelujah, Praise the Lord!  
Hallelujah, Praise the Lord!  
Right where we are.

**FEED**

*God gives enough food for all.*

**READING**

**John 6:35-40**

A reading from the book of John.

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe. Everything that the Father gives me will come to me, and anyone who comes to me I will never drive away; for I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son and believe in him may have eternal life; and I will raise them up on the last day."

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

**THE PASSING OF THE PEACE**

# MEAL

*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.*

## **GREAT THANKSGIVING**

Lift up your heads; **we lift them up to God.**

Lift up your voices; **we lift them up to God.**

Lift up your hearts; **we lift them up to God.**

## **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

And so we gather at the table. We come from many different places in life. And as we come together around the table we discover that our differences are not something we just tolerate, but that our differences are indeed a blessing. So come, children of God, just as you are. Wherever you are on this journey of life and faith, you are welcome here - here in this place, here in this community, here at this table. Come, children of God, come and remember. Remember the stories that Jesus' friends tell: Stories of bread broken and shared to feed a multitude; stories of gathering both enemy and friend together around a common table; stories of unlikely guests revealing the face of the sacred.

On a night of both celebration and betrayal Jesus took bread, blessed it and broke it; gave it to his disciples and said, "Take and eat, this is my body given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me." Then Jesus took the cup, blessed it, and gave it to his disciples 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."

And so we pray: Lord, bless this bread and bless this fruit of the vine. Bless all of us in our eating and drinking that our eyes might be open, and that we might recognize the risen Christ in our midst, indeed in one another.

## **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

All people are called to Christ's table. Come, eat what is good.



## **HOLY COMMUNION** - *Receiving the Lord's tangible presence.*

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Each person may respond: **Amen.**

**Communion Statement** ~ *If you believe in your heart that Jesus Christ is your Savior and Redeemer and would like to receive Holy Communion, then come forward to receive the elements. If you would just like to come forward and receive a blessing, then you may do that also.*

*NOTE: We invite everyone to come forward for Holy Communion. If you have a gluten allergy, gluten-free wafers are available upon request when receiving Communion. Also, if you prefer not to receive wine at Communion, apple juice is available upon request.*

## **REFLECTION DURING COMMUNION**

*As we prepare to receive the sacrament today, may we quietly take this time to center ourselves on Christ, and the amazing gifts of grace and forgiveness that we have been given. As we receive the body and the blood of our Lord, let us reflect upon His sacrifice. Finally, may we take this time to ask the Holy Spirit to enter our hearts, and then to work **in** us and **through** us in the coming days.*

## **\*\* TABLE BLESSING**

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and always keep you in God's grace. **Amen.**

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

We thank you, generous God, for the refreshment we have received at your banquet table. Send us now to spread your generosity into all the world, through the one who is our dearest treasure, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

COMMUNION HYMN

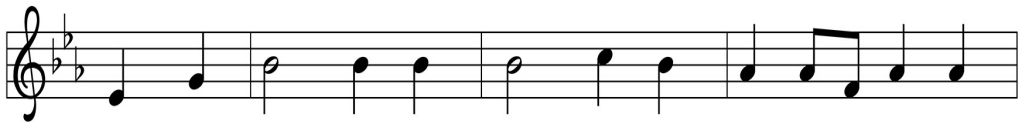
*Let Us Break Bread Together (ELW 471)*



1 Let us break bread to - geth-er on our knees;  
2 Let us drink wine to - geth-er on our knees;  
3 Let us praise God to - geth-er on our knees;



let us break bread to - geth-er on our knees.  
let us drink wine to - geth-er on our knees.  
let us praise God to - geth-er on our knees.



When I fall on my knees, with my face to the ris - ing



sun, O Lord, have mer-cy on me.

# SENDING

**\*\* BLESSING**

*God gives sabbath for all creation to rest.*

May the road rise to meet you, may the wind be at your back, the sun shine upon your heads, and the rain pour upon your fields. Until we meet again, may God hold you in the palms of God's hands.

**\*\* CLOSING HYMN**

*Shalom, Haverim*

Shalom, chaverim.

Shalom, chaverim.

Shalom, shalom.

L'hitraot, l'hitraot,

Shalom, shalom.

**“W + 2” = Worship Plus Two**

**Make a commitment to not only worship each week  
but also try to find a way to serve in the congregation  
and seek out a way to serve our community.**

**YOU ARE NOW ENTERING THE MISSION FIELD**

From Sundays and Seasons.com. Copyright 2014 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.

Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #22920.

New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.