

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



SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

SEPTEMBER 24, 2023

10:30 A.M.

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH

901 EAST STROOP ROAD

KETTERING, OH 45429-4688

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SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Introduction

Matthew narrates one of Jesus' controversial parables, in which Jesus says the reign of God is like workers who get paid the same no matter when they start. When God changes his mind about punishing Nineveh for their evil ways, Jonah is angry. Yet God is gracious and merciful, abounding in steadfast love. In baptism we receive the grace of God that is freely given to all. As Luther wrote, in the presence of God's mercy we are all beggars.

Daily Bread for Everyone

We all have a natural sense of justice, and of what is fair. We might easily conflate the two, but justice and fairness don't always lead to the same end. Jesus' parable of the landowner and the workers suggests that God's sense of justice might not seem fair to everyone. Our ideas of what is right are likely upended by the landowner's generosity. He gives to each worker not what they have earned but rather the "daily bread" they need.

Sometimes in the church's ministry, we behave in a spirit exactly opposite that of the parable's landowner, opting to be "fair" above all else. So, for example, the food pantry can insist on the same items in the same amount for everyone, or the soup kitchen rules dictate that everyone get the same thing on their tray. Yet everyone doesn't always have the same needs. What if instead of fairness, we also made a way for generosity to sometimes disrupt the rules? There are good reasons for insisting on fairness. Rules establish helpful boundaries. Fairness can help ensure that when resources are scarce, everyone has a chance to receive something. Yet, in the name of fairness, we can also overlook both God's abundant generosity and the actual needs of others.

Maybe Jesus' parable doesn't mean changing the rules altogether. But maybe it means leaving ample space for those situations in which emulating God's generosity means bending the rules. God's grace frees us from a stubborn insistence on "only what's fair" so that we can care for others with generous spirits. No matter when we come to the baptismal waters, God's word of grace is enough to cover our sins. No matter our circumstances when we are gathered at Christ's table, God's generosity means there is always enough for each and every one of us to receive the daily bread we need.

PRELUDE

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastor Jamie Vannoy

CALL TO WORSHIP

Our God Saves

In the name of the Father, in the name of the Son,
In the name of the Spirit, Lord, we come.
We're gathered together to lift up your name,
To call on our Savior, to fall on your grace.
Hear the joyful sound of our offering,
As your saints bow down, as your people sing;
We will rise with you, lifted on your wings,
And the world will see that:

Our God saves, our God saves.
There is hope in your name
Mourning turns to songs of praise:
Our God saves, our God saves!

OPENING LITANY:

The Holy One is here in this community of faith:

Great is our God and greatly to be praised!

Let us bless the Name of the Lord in all times and in all places.

Great is our God and greatly to be praised!

Let us behold the glory of the works of God.

Great is our God and greatly to be praised!

Let us bless and praise God's name forever and ever

Great is our God and greatly to be praised!

(Verse 1 - Music Ministers / All)

Give thanks to the Lord, our God and King;

His love endures forever!

For he is good, he is above all things;

His love endures forever!

Sing praise, sing praise.

(Verse 2 - Music Ministers / All)

With a mighty hand and an outstretched arm,

His love endures forever!

For the life that's been reborn,

His love endures forever!

Sing praise, sing praise,

Sing praise, sing praise.

(Refrain - All)

Forever God is faithful,

Forever God is strong,

Forever God is with us,

Forever, forever!

(Verse 3 - Music Ministers / All)

From the rising to the setting sun,

His love endures forever!

And by the grace of God, we will carry on.

His love endures forever!

Sing praise, sing praise,

Sing praise, sing praise.

(Refrain - All)

Forever God is faithful,

Forever God is strong,

Forever God is with us,

Forever, forever!

All the People Said Amen

(Verse 1 - Music Ministers)

You are not alone if you are lonely.
When you feel afraid, you're not the only.
We are all the same - in need of mercy,
To be forgiven and be free.
It's all you got to lean on,
But thank God it's all you need.

(Refrain - All)

**And all the people said, "amen." Whoa!
And all the people said, "amen."
Give thanks to the Lord, for his love never ends;
And all the people said, "amen."**

(Verse 2 - Music Ministers)

If you're rich or poor... well it don't matter;
Weak or strong, you know love is what we're after.
We're all broken, but we're all in this together.
God knows we stumble and fall,
And he so loved the world,
He sent his Son to save us all.

(Refrain - All)

**And all the people said, "amen." Whoa!
And all the people said, "amen."
Give thanks to the Lord, for his love never ends;
And all the people said, "amen."**

(Bridge - Music Ministers / All)

Blessed are the poor in spirit who are torn apart;
Blessed are the persecuted and the pure in heart;
Blessed are the people hungry for another start,
For theirs is the kingdom, **the kingdom of God.**

(Final Refrain - All)

**And all the people said, "amen." Whoa!
And all the people said, "amen."
Give thanks to the Lord, for his love never ends;
And all the people said, "amen."**

**And all the people said, "amen." Whoa!
And all the people said, "amen."
Give thanks to the Lord, for his love never ends;
And all the people said, "amen."
And all the people said, "amen."**

Be Thou My Vision

- Verse 1 Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;
naught be all else to me, save that thou art:
thou my best thought both by day and by night,
waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.
- Verse 2 Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true word;
I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord.
Thou my soul's shelter, and thou my high tow'r,
raise thou me heav'nward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.
- Verse 3 Riches I heed not, nor vain, empty praise,
thou mine inheritance, now and always:
thou and thou only, the first in my heart,
great God of heaven, my treasure thou art.
- Verse 4 Light of my soul, after victory won,
may I reach heaven's joys, O heaven's Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

CONFESSION

Let us bow before God in humility, confessing our sin.

(Silence is kept for reflection.)

Steadfast and faithful God,

you have revealed the ways of justice, yet we fail to follow you. We are overwhelmed by the world's violence and suffering. We are afraid to risk what we have for the sake of others. For the harm we have caused, known and unknown, forgive us. For the unjust demands we place on others and your creation, forgive us. For the ways we turn away from you and our neighbor, forgive us. Lead us back to you and set us on the right path; in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

FORGIVENESS

Beloved in Christ, God's justice stretches beyond all understanding. God's compassion is beyond compare. In Jesus, God is always making a new way for us. In Christ, you are already and always forgiven. **Amen.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty and eternal God, **you show perpetual lovingkindness to us your servants. Because we cannot rely on our own abilities, grant us your merciful judgment, and train us to embody the generosity of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

WORD

*Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets,
Jesus interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.*

FIRST READING

Jonah 3:10--4:11

After Jonah's short sermon in 3:4, the Ninevites all repented and God decided to spare the city. Jonah objected to this and became even more angry when God ordered a worm to destroy a plant that was providing shade. The book ends with a question that challenges any who are not ready to forgive: You, Jonah, are all worked up about a bush, but shouldn't I be concerned about a hundred and twenty thousand Ninevites?

A reading from the book of Jonah.

When God saw what [the people of Ninevah] did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it. But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. He prayed to the LORD and said, "O LORD! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing. And now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live." And the LORD said, "Is it right for you to be angry?" Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city, and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city. The LORD God appointed a bush, and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort; so Jonah was very happy about the bush. But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, "It is better for me to die than to live." But God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?" And he said, "Yes, angry enough to die." Then the LORD said, "You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also many animals?"

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

PSALM

Psalm 145:1-8

The LORD is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. (Ps. 145:8)

I will exalt you, my God and king,
and bless your name forever and ever.

**Every day will I bless you
and praise your name forever and ever.**

Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised!
There is no end to your greatness.

**One generation shall praise your works to another
and shall de-clare your power.**

I will speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty
and all your marvelous works.

**They shall tell of the might of your wondrous acts,
and I will recount your greatness.**

They shall publish the remembrance of your great goodness;
they shall sing joyfully of your righteousness.

**The LORD is gracious and full of compassion,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.**

SECOND READING

Philippians 1:21-30

Paul writes to the Philippians from prison. Though he is uncertain about the outcome of his imprisonment, he is committed to the ministry of the gospel and calls on the Philippians to live lives that reflect and enhance the gospel mission.

A reading from Paul's letter to the Phillipians.

For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which I prefer. I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again. Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well—since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

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

**** GOSPEL READING****Matthew 20:1-16**

Jesus tells a parable about God's generosity, challenging the common assumption that God rewards people according to what they have earned or deserve.

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said to the disciples:] "The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?' So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

YOUTH MESSAGE**MESSAGE**

Pastor Jamie Vannoy

**** 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 power of the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
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,
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 THE COMMUNITY

GATHERING OF GIFTS

OFFERTORY

Will the Circle Be Unbroken?
by Tony Alonso
Angie Seltzer, soprano
Mark Shoemaker, baritone
Chancel Choir

OFFERING PRAYER

God of power, God of plenty, all things belong to you. We bring your gifts to the table, that all might be fed. Form us into the body of your Beloved, Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

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.

**** LORD'S PRAYER**

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Jesus invites you to this table. Come, eat and live.

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

Blessed be your name, O God, for we have feasted on your Word, Christ Jesus, the joy and delight of our hearts. Strengthened by this food, send us to gather the world to your banquet, where none are left out and all are satisfied. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

** BLESSING

The God of glory, Jesus Christ, name above all names, and the Spirit who lives in you, bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG

Trading My Sorrows

(Music Ministers/All)

I'm trading my sorrows, I'm trading my shame,
I'm laying them down for the joy of the Lord.
**I'm trading my sickness, I'm trading my pain,
I'm laying them down for the joy of the Lord.**

(All)

**Yes, Lord, yes, Lord, yes, yes, Lord;
Yes, Lord, yes, Lord, yes, yes, Lord;
Yes, Lord, yes, Lord, yes, yes, Lord, amen.**

(Music Ministers)

I am pressed, but not crushed,
Persecuted, not abandoned,
Struck down, but not destroyed;
I am blessed beyond the curse,
For his promise will endure,
That his joy's gonna be my strength.
Though the sorrow may last for the night,
His joy comes with the morning.

(All)

**I'm trading my sorrows, I'm trading my shame,
I'm laying them down for the joy of the Lord.
I'm trading my sickness, I'm trading my pain,
I'm laying them down for the joy of the Lord.**

**Yes, Lord, yes, Lord, yes, yes, Lord;
Yes, Lord, yes, Lord, yes, yes, Lord;
Yes, Lord, yes, Lord, yes, yes, Lord, amen.**

(Music Ministers)
I am pressed, but not crushed,
Persecuted, not abandoned,
Struck down, but not destroyed;
I am blessed beyond the curse,
For his promise will endure,
That his joy's gonna be my strength.
Though the sorrow may last for the night,
His joy comes with the morning.

(All)
**I'm trading my sorrows, I'm trading my shame,
I'm laying them down for the joy of the Lord.
I'm trading my sickness, I'm trading my pain,
I'm laying them down for the joy of the Lord.**

(Music Ministers/All)
La, la, la...
La, la, la...

**** DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. God is at work in you.

Created, saved and gifted by God, we seek, serve and share Jesus Christ.

Hallelujah! Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

“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

Upcoming Commemorations

Michael and All Angels Friday, September 29, 2023

Michael the archangel, captain of the heavenly hosts, is remembered on this day along with the other angels and archangels. The word “angel” means messenger, and in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, these beings have a fully spiritual nature and no physical body.

Jerome, translator, teacher, died 420 Saturday, September 30, 2023

Jerome was a biblical scholar and translator, but rather than translating the original Hebrew and Greek scriptures into classical Latin, he worked in the commonly-spoken Latin of the day, creating a version called the Vulgate.

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