

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

Is It Possible?
February 23, 2025
10:30am

AS WE GATHER

Today's Old Testament Reading is the account of Joseph forgiving his brothers, who had sold him into slavery years earlier. Is it possible for us to forgive as he did? Joseph learned to trust in God and how He would arrange things. God has arranged everything for us too! The resurrection of Jesus is beyond our understanding but not beyond our comprehension. So Paul tries to explain about heavenly beings. We don't know much about them, but we can forgive because our Lord went a lot farther than we are called to follow, into death, for God to forgive us. Today Word and Sacrament strengthen us to follow His example in daily living.

Reception of Holy Communion: If you are planning to receive Christ's supper today, please read through the words of exhortation in the fellowship folder. For members, it is a good review of important spiritual matters for gathering at the table. For guests, it explains our stance on confession of faith, doctrinal unity, and proper spiritual preparation to receive the Supper for your benefit.

WELCOME

[Christ] was foreknown before the foundation of the world
but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you
who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead
and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.
1 Peter 1:20-21

HANDSHAKES & HUGS

PREPARATION

OPENING HYMN

"You Are My King"

Verse: I'm forgiven because You were forsaken.
I'm accepted, You were condemned.
I'm alive and well, Your Spirit is within me
Because You died and rose again
(Repeat verse)

Chorus: Amazing love, how can it be
That You, My King, would die for me?
Amazing love, I know it's true;
It's my joy to honor You.
In all I do, let me honor You.
(Repeat verse and chorus)

Bridge: You are my King,
You are my King,
Jesus, You are my King
Jesus, You are my King...
(Repeat chorus final time)

Ending: In all I do, let me honor You.

(Rise)

INVOCATION & OPENING SENTENCES

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

Pastor: As by a man came death,

People: by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead.

Pastor: As in Adam all die,

People: so also in Christ shall all be made alive.

Pastor: What is sown is perishable;

People: what is raised is imperishable.

CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Confident of our Lord's victory over death, leading all who follow Him by faith, let us confess our sins. "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you." We confess our failure to love our enemies, O Lord.

People: Too often we have responded to them as they have dealt with us. We have not done to them as we wish they would have done to us. Forgive us, Father.

Pastor: "If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you?" We confess our giving preference to people who are like us.

People: Too often we have loved those near and dear to us and have dealt with others without love and mercy. Forgive us, Lord Jesus.

Pastor: "Judge not, and you will not be judged." We confess our judgment of people we think are not up to the standards we think we can meet.

People: Too often we have failed to pass on the forgiveness we have received from you, O Holy Spirit. Forgive us, Lord our God.

Pastor: "Forgive, and you will be forgiven." Your sins have been forgiven by the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ! As a called and ordained servant of His, I therefore forgive you in the name of the Father and of the +Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

HYMN OF PRAISE "Amazing Grace (My Chains are Gone)" Newton, Tomlin, Giglio

Amazing grace how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me
I once was lost but now I'm found
Was blind but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear
And grace my fears relieved
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed.

Chorus: My Chains are gone, I've been set free
My God, my Savior, has ransomed me
And like a flood, His mercy reigns
Unending love, amazing grace.

The Lord has promised good to me
His Word my hope secures
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures.

Chorus 2x

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow
The sun forbear to shine
But God who called me here below
Will be forever mine...
Will be forever mine...
You are forever mine.

SALUTATION & PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Let us pray. Lord God, our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, we pray your protection and guidance.

People: Be a ready source of strength so that the world around us will not deceive us and lead us from your guidance and forgiveness;

Pastor: through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

(Be seated)

WORD

OLD TESTAMENT READING *Genesis 45:3–15* (Joseph explains to his brothers that God is really in control of all things, including their selling him into slavery.)

³And Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?" But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed at his presence. ⁴So Joseph said to his brothers, "Come near to me, please." And they came near. And he said, "I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt." ⁵And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. ⁶For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are yet five years in which there will be neither plowing nor

harvest.⁷ And God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors.⁸ So it was not you who sent me here, but God. He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt.⁹ Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, ‘Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me; do not tarry.¹⁰ You shall dwell in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children's children, and your flocks, your herds, and all that you have.¹¹ There I will provide for you, for there are yet five years of famine to come, so that you and your household, and all that you have, do not come to poverty.’¹² And now your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see, that it is my mouth that speaks to you.¹³ You must tell my father of all my honor in Egypt, and of all that you have seen. Hurry and bring my father down here.”¹⁴ Then he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, and Benjamin wept upon his neck.¹⁵ And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them. After that his brothers talked with him.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE *1 Corinthians 15:21–26, 30–42* (“What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable.”)²¹ For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead.²² For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.²³ But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ.²⁴ Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power.²⁵ For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.²⁶ The last enemy to be destroyed is death.³⁰ Why are we in danger every hour?³¹ I protest, brothers, by my pride in you, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die every day!³² What do I gain if, humanly speaking, I fought with beasts at Ephesus? If the dead are not raised, “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.”³³ Do not be deceived: “Bad company ruins good morals.”³⁴ Wake up from your drunken stupor, as is right, and do not go on sinning. For some have no knowledge of God. I say this to your shame.³⁵ But someone will ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?”³⁶ You foolish person! What you sow

does not come to life unless it dies.³⁷ And what you sow is not the body that is to be, but a bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain.³⁸ But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body.³⁹ For not all flesh is the same, but there is one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish.⁴⁰ There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is of one kind, and the glory of the earthly is of another.⁴¹ There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory.⁴² So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

(Rise)

HOLY GOSPEL *Luke 6:27–38* (Jesus preaches about loving our enemies, beggars we meet, and others.)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the sixth chapter.

People: Glory to you, O Lord.

²⁷“But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you,²⁸ bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you.²⁹To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from one who takes away your cloak do not withhold your tunic either.³⁰ Give to everyone who begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods do not demand them back.³¹ And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them.³² “If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them.³³ And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners do the same.³⁴ And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to get back the same amount.³⁵But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil.³⁶ Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.³⁷“Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven;³⁸ give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.”

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, O Christ.

(Be seated)

CHILDREN'S SONG & CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

"There is a Name I Love to Hear" AGPS#236

There is a name I love to hear; I love to sing it s worth.
It sounds like music in my ear, the sweetest name on earth.

Refrain: Oh, how I love Jesus, Oh, how I love Jesus!
Oh, how I love Jesus, because He first loved me.

It tells me of a Savior's love, who died to set me free.
It tells me of His precious blood, the sinner's perfect plea. Refrain

SERMON HYMN "Change My Heart, O God"

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.

(Repeat song)

Change my heart, O God,
Make it ever true.
Change my heart, O God,
May I be like You.

SERMON

(Rise)

OFFERTORY

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Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.
Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and uphold me with Thy free spirit.
Amen.

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.
Amen.

(Be seated)

OFFERING As your offering is collected, **please sign our fellowship folder** located at the end of the pew. If you are a visitor, please leave your address and phone. After you are finished, please pass the folder along to others in your pew, and return it to the center aisle. You may check the folder to see names of those to greet after the service.

SONG DURING OFFERING

"Amazing Love"

(Rise)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Pastor: Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

O Lord, your servant Joseph endured hardship and struggle, yet he believed it would come to good. Give us such tested faith, and bring all things to completion according to your purposes in Christ.

People: As Joseph endured much from the hands of his brothers and still forgave and embraced them, move us to love and embrace and forgive those who sin against us.

Pastor: Preserve and unite your Church, O Lord. Bring an end to her earthly divisions, which grieve you. Give her the true unity of doctrine and faith in your Word.

People: Bless and sustain our leaders in our Synod, district, circuit and this congregation. Bless our Together in Mission partner, Pastor Chuck Ferry and family as they serve on the mission field.

Pastor: Almighty God, your Son, our Lord, commanded us to love our enemies, do good to those who hate us and pray for those who persecute us. We implore you, by your gracious visitation, to empower us to love in the face of hatred and to bless in the face of cursing.

People: Through the love of Christ, lead our enemies to true repentance, to have the same love, be of one accord, and share one mind and heart with us in Christ.

Pastor: Merciful God, give us guidance amid the changes and chances of this mortal life. Deliver us from the pangs of doubt and the paralysis of fear.

People: Strengthen our faith in our Lord, Jesus Christ, and the power of His resurrection, that we may not surrender to anxiety or despair, but live in His joy.

Pastor: Righteous Lord, uphold civil authority and those responsible for the welfare of our nation, state and community. Help them steadfastly to pursue the cause of justice and protect life from beginning to natural end.

People: Guard all first responders, and protect those who defend us here or abroad.

Pastor: Lord of the Church, you lead and guide your servants to fulfill your will at specific times and places.

People: Trusting in your mercy and the prayerful consideration of Pastor Josh, please give us and the people of Immanuel peace in the decision he makes.

Pastor: Heavenly Father, according to your will grant healing to the sick and infirm especially Elizabeth, Kay, Rhonda, Harland, Liz, Jerry, June, Wendy, Sharon, John, Debbie, Bob, Judy, Carole, Audrey, Janice, David, Helga, Dick, Michael, Margie, Anna, Charlene, Marlene, Dorothy, Marga, Ardis, Noah, Guy, Mike, Jill, Janet, Cathy, Shirley and Sarah. Grant them patience to endure their time of suffering.

People: Endow them with hope and peace, and crown their days with your mercy.

Pastor: Lord of life, we thank you for all your blessings and especially the blessing of family and friends. We rejoice with the Weil family as they celebrate Amanda's birthday.

People: Bless also Chris Hinz as she remembers her mother on what would have been her 100th birthday. Comfort all those who long to be reunited with loved ones in the life to come.

Pastor: We give thanks for the gift of this blessed Sacrament, O Lord.

People: Give us a right heart as we prepare to eat and drink Christ's true body and blood, that by it we would be equipped to love you above all and our neighbors as ourselves.

Pastor: Lord God, heavenly Father, we confess that we are poor, miserable sinners with no good in us by nature. Our hearts and our flesh and blood are corrupted by sin. Therefore, we implore you, forgive us our sins. Let your Holy Spirit so cleanse our hearts that we would love your Word, abide by it and, by your grace, be saved forever; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the same Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

SACRAMENT

PREFACE

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

PROPER PREFACE

Pastor: It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to you, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. When He walked this earth, He modelled for us obedience to the Father and mercy to all people. He has lived among us, revealing your glory and love, that our darkness should give way to His own brilliant light. Therefore with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven we laud and magnify your holy name, evermore praising you and saying:

SANCTUS

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Holy, holy, holy Lord God of pow'r and might:
Heaven and earth are full of Your glory,
Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

PAX DOMINI

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

People: **Amen.**

AGNUS DEI

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Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.

(Be seated)

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

HYMN #642

“O Living Bread From Heaven”

O living Bread from heaven, How well you feed your guest!
The gifts that you have given Have filled my heart with rest.
Oh, wondrous food of blessing, Oh, cup that heals our woes!
My heart, this gift possessing, With praises overflows.

My Lord, you here have led me To this most holy place
And with yourself have fed me The treasures of your grace;
For you have freely given What earth could never buy,
The bread of life from heaven, That now I shall not die.

You gave me all I wanted; This food can death destroy.
And you have freely granted The cup of endless joy.
My Lord, I do not merit The favor you have shown,
And all my soul and spirit Bow down before your throne.

Lord, grant me then, thus strengthened With heav'nly food, while here
My course on earth is lengthened, To serve with holy fear.
And when you call my spirit To leave this world below,
I enter, through your merit, Where joys unmingled flow.

“My Redeemer Lives” Morgan

I know He rescued my soul
His blood has covered my sin
I believe, I believe
My shame, He's taken away
My pain is healed in His name
I believe, I believe
I'll raise a banner
'Cause my Lord has conquered the grave

Chorus: My Redeemer lives, my Redeemer lives
My Redeemer lives, my Redeemer lives

Repeat verse and chorus

Bridge: You lift my burdens, I'll rise with You
I'm dancing on this mountaintop to see Your kingdom come...

Sing chorus twice

“Living Hope” Johnson Wickham

How great the chasm that lay between us
How high the mountain I could not climb
In desperation I turned to heaven
And spoke Your name into the night
Then through the darkness Your loving-kindness
Tore through the shadows of my soul
The work is finished the end is written
Jesus Christ my living hope

Who could imagine so great a mercy
What heart could fathom such boundless grace
The God of ages stepped down from glory
To wear my sin and bear my shame
The cross has spoken I am forgiven
The King of kings calls me His own
Beautiful Savior I’m Yours forever
Jesus Christ my living hope

Chorus **Hallelujah praise the One who set me free**
Hallelujah death has lost its grip on me
You have broken every chain
There’s salvation in Your name
Jesus Christ my living hope

Then came the morning that sealed the promise
Your buried body began to breathe
Out of the silence the Roaring Lion
Declared the grave has no claim on me (REPEAT)

Jesus Yours is the victory

Chorus twice

Ending **Jesus Christ my living hope**

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COMMON DISMISSAL

(Rise)

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Let us pray. We give thanks to you, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through this salutary gift,

People: and we implore you to guide, protect, and defend us so that we may always let your love, mercy, and forgiveness move our hearts and minds;

Pastor: through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

BENEDICTION

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

People: Amen.

DISMISSAL

Pastor: Go in peace as you serve our heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

People: Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

“Jesus Messiah” Tomlin, Carson, Cash, Reeves

He became sin who knew no sin
That we might become His righteousness
He humbled Himself and carried the cross
Love so amazing, love so amazing

Chorus: **Jesus Messiah, Name above all names**
 Blessed Redeemer, Emmanuel
 The Rescue for sinners, the Ransom from heaven
 Jesus Messiah, Lord of all

His body the bread, His blood the wine
Broken and poured out all for love
The whole earth trembled and the veil was torn
Love so amazing, love so amazing

Repeat Chorus

Bridge: All our hope is in You, all our hope is in You
 All the glory to You, God, the Light of the world...

Repeat Chorus

Ending: Jesus Messiah, You are Lord of all

POSTLUDE

“Amazing Love”

Preacher

Liturgist

Lector

Special Music

Pastor Harold Bender

Pastor Joshua Grotelueschen

Debbie Nier

Praise Band

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