

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Grand Generosity
September 19 & 20, 2020

AS WE GATHER

A part of us expects justice from God. We think that fairness ought to reign—that each of us should get what we deserve. But this is a dead end. God does not give us what we deserve but acts with mercy and grace beyond belief. He is scandalously generous and lavish with us—giving us what we do not deserve and have not earned. We are tempted to ask God for equity and what we deserve, but God is determined to give us so much more in Christ. Only in faith can we learn to let God be God, to honor His generosity with the only response He desires: faith and thanksgiving. Today we pray the Lord to break through to our hearts and minds with His abundant grace and to rejoice that He is more than fair—He is merciful!

WELCOME

The counsel of the LORD stands forever,
the plans of His heart to all generations. Psalm 33:11

✠ PREPARATION ✠

OPENING HYMN #869 “With the Lord Begin Your Task”

With the Lord begin your task; Jesus will direct it.
For His aid and counsel ask; Jesus will perfect it.
Every morn with Jesus rise, And when day is ended,
In His name then close your eyes; Be to Him commended.

Let each day begin with prayer, Praise, and adoration.
On the Lord cast every care; He is your salvation.
Morning, evening, and at night Jesus will be near you,
Save you from the tempter’s might, With His presence cheer you.

With your Savior at your side, Foes need not alarm you;
In His promises confide, And no ill can harm you.
All your trust and hope repose In the mighty Master,
Who in wisdom truly knows How to stem disaster.

If your task be thus begun With the Savior’s blessing,
Safely then your course will run, Toward the promise pressing.
Good will follow everywhere While you here must wander;
You at last the joy will share In the mansions yonder.

Thus, Lord Jesus, every task Be to You commended;
May Your will be done, I ask, Until life is ended.
Jesus, in Your name begun Be the day’s endeavor;
Grant that it may well be done To Your praise forever.

(Rise)

INVOCATION & OPENING SENTENCES

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

People: Amen.

Pastor: Hide not your face from me.

People: Turn not your servant away in anger,

Pastor: O you who have been my help.

People: Cast me not off; forsake me not, O God of my salvation!

CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Let us confess our sins to God our Father.

People: I, a poor sinner, plead guilty before God of all sins. I have lived as if God did not matter and as if I mattered most. My Lord’s name I have not honored as I should; my worship and prayers have faltered. I have not let His love have its way with me, and so my love for others has failed. There are those whom I have hurt, and those whom I have failed to help. My thoughts and desires have been soiled with sin.

Pastor: Is this your sincere confession?

People: Yes, I am sorry for all my sins, and I ask for grace that I may do better. Amen.

Pastor: As you believe, so let it be. Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins, in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

HYMN OF PRAISE

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To God on high be glory And peace to all the earth;
Goodwill from God in heaven Proclaimed at Jesus' birth!
We praise and bless you, Father; Your holy name, we sing –
Our thanks for your great glory, Lord God, our Heav'nly King.

To You, O solebegotten, The Father's Son, we pray;
O Lamb of God, our Savior, You take our sins away.
Have mercy on us, Jesus; Receive our heartfelt cry,
Where You in pow'r are seated At God's right hand on high.

For You alone are holy; You only are the Lord.
Forever and forever, Be worshipped and adored;
You with the Holy Spirit Alone are Lord Most High.
In God the Father's glory. "Amen!" our glad reply.

SALUTATION & PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Let us pray. O blessed Lord, since we cannot count on anything we have done, give us grace to count on Christ and His redeeming work upon the cross. As we delight in His grace, so give us humility to receive your generosity without offense and trust in your mercy alone for our salvation; through Jesus Christ, 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 *Isaiah 55:6–9* (Seek the Lord while He may be found.) ⁶“Seek the LORD while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; ⁷let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. ⁸For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD. ⁹For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE *Philippians 1:12–14, 19–30* (Let your manner of life be worthy of the Gospel of Christ.) ¹²I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, ¹³so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ. ¹⁴And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. ¹⁹for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance, ²⁰as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. ²¹For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. ²²If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. ²³I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. ²⁴But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. ²⁵Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith, ²⁶so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again. ²⁷Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, ²⁸and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. ²⁹For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, ³⁰engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

CHILDREN'S SONG

“God is So Good” - author unknown

God is so good, God is so good, God is so good, He's so good to me.

He cares for me, He cares for me, He cares for me, He's so good to me.

I'll do His will, I'll do His will, I'll do His will, He's so good to me.

He loves me so, He loves me so, He loves me so, He's so good to me.

(Rise)

HOLY GOSPEL *Matthew 20:1–16* (The last will be first and the first will be last.)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the twentieth chapter.

People: Glory to you, O Lord.

“For the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ²After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³And going out about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, ⁴and to them he said, ‘You go into the vineyard too, and whatever is right I will give you.’ ⁵So they went. Going out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour, he did the same. ⁶And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing. And he said to them, ‘Why do you stand here idle all day?’ ⁷They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You go into the vineyard too.’ ⁸And when evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, ‘Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last, up to the first.’ ⁹And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius. ¹⁰Now when those hired first came, they thought they would receive more, but each of them also received a denarius. ¹¹And on receiving it they grumbled at the master of the house, ¹²saying, ‘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.’ ¹³But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius?’ ¹⁴Take what belongs to you and go. I choose to give to this last worker as I give to you. ¹⁵Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or do you begrudge my generosity?’ ¹⁶So the last will be first, and the first last.”

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, O Christ.

(Be seated)

SERMON HYMN #827 “Hark, the Voice of Jesus Calling”

Hark, the voice of Jesus calling, “Who will go and work today?
Fields are white and harvest waiting Who will bear the sheaves away?”
Loud and long the Master calleth Rich reward He offers thee.
Who will answer, gladly saying, “Here am I, send me, send me?”
Some take up His task in morning, To their Lord responding soon;
Some are called in heat of midday, Others late in afternoon;
Even as the sun is setting, Some are sent into the fields,
There to gather in the bounty That God’s Word so richly yields.
For as rain and snow from heaven Water seeds in dusty soil,
Causing them to bud and flower, Giving bread to those who toil;
So the Lord sends forth His promise, Words of life and joy and peace
Never void to Him returning, Bearing fruit with great increase.

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Hearken to the Lord whose coming Marks the time when grace shall end,
When with His angelic reapers He in glory shall descend.
Soon the night, the final harvest; Soon the time for work shall cease.
Then the souls His grace has garnered Shall enjoy His Sabbath peace.

SERMON

“It’s Not Fair”

Matthew 20:1-16

(Rise)

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.

OFFERING Offering plates will be placed in the narthex and elevator room for gathering at the end of the service.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Pastor: In peace, let us pray to the Lord and offer to Him the petitions and supplications as people confident of His promise to hear and answer us with mercy.

Brief silence

Pastor: That we may seek the Lord while He may be found, call upon Him in the day of salvation, and be prepared by His mercy for the Day of Judgment, let us pray to the Lord:

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: That we would delight in our God’s generosity, in His gracious ways that bestow blessings exceeding what we deserve, and that we would learn to rejoice in His generosity towards others, let us pray to the Lord:

People: Lord, have mercy.

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Pastor: For Jerry and Audrey Spitzer celebrating their 64th wedding anniversary as well as David and Helga Sartori, rejoicing in the years God has given them together, that we may rejoice in the blessings of marriage and family, let us pray to the Lord:

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For all of God's precious children, that we may delight in the light of Christ and His salvation, and that even more sinners may find refuge in His mercy and comfort in His forgiveness, let us pray to the Lord:

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For our Together in Mission partners, Pastor Chuck Ferry and Rachel Meyer and for all servants of the Lord, that we may hear the voice of God speaking in His Word and be nurtured by faithful pastors who preach and teach this Gospel, let us pray to the Lord:

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For Christian homes, that God's Word may be the foundation of relationships, that husband and wife may be united in this faith and hope, and that their children may hear and be nurtured in this Word by faithful parents, let us pray to the Lord:

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For our nation and all nations, that we may enjoy the blessing of good government, faithful leaders, peace in our land and peace among the nations, and that we may be good citizens and neighbors, let us pray to the Lord:

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For those sick and afflicted, that they may be healed, the troubled know peace, the grieving be comforted and the dying be delivered to everlasting life in Christ, and especially for Margie, Don, Jan, Louis, Dawn, Charles, Carol, Debbie, Mary, Dennis, Diane, Arlene, Dorothy, June, Jerry, Cindy, Shirley, Sarah, Gladys, Shirley, Sarah, and that we may all be delivered from fear, anxiety and despair because of God's gracious care, let us pray to the Lord:

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For those who approach the altar this day, that we may commune in faith, that no unrepentant sin may hinder our reception of Christ's body and blood, and that the fruits of this communion may show forth in a manner of life in keeping with who we are as God's children by Baptism and faith, let us pray to the Lord:

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For the good stewardship of God's people, that we may honor the Lord with praise and thanksgiving and bring our tithes and offerings as grateful people, let us pray to the Lord:

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For those who have gone before us, that we may not forget the witness of the faithful who lived and died in Christ, and that we may at last be joined with them in the marriage supper of the Lamb in His Kingdom without end, let us pray to the Lord:

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: Hear the prayers of your people, O Lord, and grant to us all things good and wholesome and keep from us all things harmful. Give us contentment, that trusting in your mercy we may delight in your saving will where the last are made first by your generosity and grace; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

People: Amen.

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.

✠ SACRAMENT ✠

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

THE PEACE OF THE LORD

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

People: Amen.

AGNUS DEI

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O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God, You take the sin of the world away;
O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God, Have mercy on us, Lord, we pray.
O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God, You take the sin of the world away;
Have mercy on us, Jesus Christ, And grant us peace, O Lord, we pray.

(Be seated)

DISTRIBUTION Wait for the ushers to direct you to come forward. Those guests who desire to commune who are members of another LCMS congregation may do so; if you are coming from another church background, please see the pastor or an elder first.

HYMN #829 “Christ the Eternal Lord”

Christ the eternal Lord, Whose promise here we claim,
Whose gifts of grace are freely poured On all who name Your name;
With thankfulness and praise We stand before Your throne,
Intent to serve You all our days And make Your glory known.

Christ the unchanging Word To ev’ry passing age,
Whose timeless teachings still are heard Set forth on Scripture’s page;
Transform our thought and mind, Enlighten all who read,
Within Your Word by faith to find The bread of life indeed.

Christ the redeeming Son, Who shares our human birth,
And by His death salvation won For ev’ry child of earth;
Inspire our hearts, we pray, To tell Your love abroad,
That all may honor Christ today And follow Him as Lord.

Christ the unfading Light Of everlasting day,
Our Morning Star in splendor bright, The Life, the Truth, the Way;
That light of truth You give To servants as to friends,
Your way to walk, Your life to live, Till earth’s brief journey ends.

Christ the ascended King Exalted high above,
Whose praise unending ages sing, Whom yet unseen we love;
When mortal life is past Your voice from heaven’s throne
Shall call Your children home at last To know as we are known.

HYMN #738 “Lord of All Hopefulness”

Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy,
Whose trust, ever child-like, no cares could destroy:
Be there at our waking, and give us, we pray,
Your bliss in our hearts, Lord, at the break of the day.

Lord of all eagerness, Lord of all faith,
Whose strong hands were skilled at the plane and the lathe:
Be there at our labors, and give us, we pray,
Your strength in our hearts, Lord, at the noon of the day.

Lord of all kindness, Lord of all grace,
Your hands swift to welcome, Your arms to embrace:
Be there at our homing, and give us, we pray,
Your love in our hearts, Lord, at the eve of the day.

Lord of all gentleness, Lord of all calm,
Whose voice is contentment, whose presence is balm:
Be there at our sleeping, and give us, we pray,
Your peace in our hearts, Lord, at the end of the day.

COMMON DISMISSAL

(Rise)

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Oh give thanks to the LORD, for He is good,

People: for His steadfast love endures forever!

Pastor: Heavenly Father, it is your gracious will that your children on earth live together in harmony and peace. Defeat the plans of all those who would stir up envy and strife, and teach us to examine our own hearts that we be free from malice and ill will. Help us by your grace so that we live lives worthy of the Gospel and live at peace with all people. Fill us with zeal for the work of your Church and the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which alone can bring that peace which is beyond all understanding; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

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. Serve the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

CLOSING HYMN #680 “Thine the Amen, Thine the Praise”

Thine the amen Thine the praise Alleluias angels raise
Thine the everlasting head Thine the breaking of the bread
Thine the glory Thine the story Thine the harvest then the cup
Thine the vineyard then the cup is lifted up lifted up.

Thine the life eternally Thine the promise let there be
Thine the vision Thine the tree All the earth on bended knee
Gone the nailing gone the railing Gone the pleading gone the cry
Gone the sighing gone the dying what was loss lifted high.

Thine the truly Thine the yes Thine the table we the guest
Thine the mercy all from Thee Thine the glory yet to be
Then the ringing and the singing Then the end of all the war
9 Thine the living Thine the loving evermore evermore.

Thine the kingdom Thine the prize Thine the wonder full surprise
Thine the banquet then the praise Then the justice of Thy ways
Thine the glory Thine the story Then the welcome to the least
Then the wonder all increasing at Thy feast at Thy feast.

Thine the glory in the night No more dying only light
Thine the river Thine the tree Then the Lamb eternally
Then the holy holy holy Celebration jubilee
Thine the splendor Thine the brightness only Thee only Thee.

Preacher
Liturgist
Director of Parish Music

Pastor Harold Bender
Pastor Noah Kegley
Michelle Prince

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