

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Completely Dependent

September 5 & 6, 2020

AS WE GATHER

“Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” Jesus’ disciples asked. Our Lord responded by welcoming a child into His midst. “Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.” Children are highly valued by our gracious God because they are completely dependent. On their own, they have nothing, yet they need everything. This is true for all of us in our relationship with God! On our own, we have only our sinful, broken lives and are unable to please God and fulfill His commands. Yet, in Jesus Christ, we possess everything we need! Forgiveness of sins and the guarantee of life forever with God are freely given to those who turn from their sin and receive the forgiveness earned by our crucified and risen Savior. In Jesus, we are, like children, completely dependent. We have nothing to offer, yet everything we need is ours to receive from the gracious hands of our Savior.

WELCOME

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

✠ PREPARATION ✠

OPENING HYMN #686 “Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing”

Come, Thou Fount of ev’ry blessing, Tune my heart to sing Thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing, Call for songs of loudest praise.
While the hope of endless glory Fills my heart with joy and love,
Teach me ever to adore Thee; May I still Thy goodness prove.

Here I raise my Ebenezer, Hither by Thy help I’ve come;
And I hope, by Thy good pleasure, Safely to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me when a stranger, Wand’ring from the fold of God;
He, to rescue me from danger, Interposed His precious blood.

Oh, to grace how great a debtor Daily I’m constrained to be;
Let that grace now like a fetter Bind my wand’ring heart to Thee:
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it; Prone to leave the God I love.
Here’s my heart, O take and seal it, Seal it for Thy courts above.

Oh, that day when freed from sinning, I shall see Thy lovely face;
Clothed then in the bloodwashed linen, How I’ll sing Thy wondrous grace!
Come, my Lord, no longer tarry; Take my ransom’d soul away;
Send Thine angels soon to carry Me to realms of endless day.

OPENING SENTENCES

Pastor: It is good to give thanks to the LORD,

People: to sing praises to your name, O Most High;

Pastor: to declare your steadfast love in the morning,

People: and your faithfulness by night.

Pastor: The Most High God gathers us to praise His name and declare His love together!

INVOCATION

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

People: Amen.

CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Lord God, you promise grace and every blessing to all who come before you and repent of their sins. Hear us now as we, your humble children, bring our prayers before you.

In silent prayer, we confess our sins to the Lord, seeking His cleansing forgiveness.

Pastor: Most merciful Father,

People: we come before you and admit our sinfulness. In our thoughts, words, and actions, we have failed to do what your Word demands. We have not honored you fully with our lives, nor have we loved one another as you have first loved us. In the name of our loving Savior Jesus Christ, we ask for your forgiveness. Because our Savior humbled Himself for our sake upon the cross, enable us in true humility to receive the remission of sins you promise to your repentant children. Amen.

Pastor: "Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered." God the Father has taken your sins and laid them upon our humble Savior Jesus Christ. Because of Christ's sacrifice, God does not count your sins against you. He has taken them away! He remembers them no more! He preserves and delivers you as His child forever! As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I 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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Glory to God in the highest, and peace to His people on earth.

Lord, God, heavenly king, almighty God and Father:

We worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God:

You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

You are seated at the right hand of the Father; receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

SALUTATION & PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Let us pray. O God, our gracious and loving Father, we are your dependent children. Although we in no way deserve your goodness, you freely offer your grace to all who turn to you.

People: Grant us faith to trust in your Son, who humbled Himself for our salvation.

Pastor: We pray this 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 *Ezekiel 33:7-9* (The watchman warns the wicked to turn from his way.) ⁷"So you, son of man, I have made a watchman for the house of Israel. Whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. ⁸If I say to the wicked, O wicked one, you shall surely die, and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from his way, that wicked person shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand. ⁹But if you warn the wicked to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, that person shall die in his iniquity, but you will have delivered your soul.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE *Romans 13:1-10* (Love is the fulfilling of the law.)

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.² Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. ³For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, ⁴for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer.⁵ Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. ⁶For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. ⁷Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.

⁸Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. ⁹For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet," and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁰Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

CHILDREN'S SONG "Jesus Loves the Little Children"

Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world.
Red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in His sight
Jesus loves the little children of the world.

Jesus cares for all the children, all the children of the world,
Ev'ry child in ev'ry land, Jesus holds them in His hand.
Jesus cares for all the children of the world.

(Rise)

HOLY GOSPEL *Matthew 18:1-20* (Jesus calls the children of God to humility and repentance.)

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

People: Glory to you, O Lord.

At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"² And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them³ and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.⁴ Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.⁵ "Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me,⁶ but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.⁷ "Woe to the world for temptations to sin! For it is necessary that temptations come, but woe to the one by whom the temptation comes!⁸ And if your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than with two hands or two feet to be thrown into the eternal fire.⁹ And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into the hell of fire.¹⁰ "See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that in heaven their angels always see the face of my Father who is in heaven.¹² What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray?¹³ And if he finds it, truly, I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray.¹⁴ So it is not the will of my Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.¹⁵ "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother.¹⁶ But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by

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the evidence of two or three witnesses.¹⁷ If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.¹⁸ Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.¹⁹ Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven.²⁰ For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them."

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, O Christ.

(Be seated)

SERMON HYMN #740 "I Am Jesus' Little Lamb"

I am Jesus' little lamb, Ever glad at heart I am;
For my Shepherd gently guides me.
Knows my need and well provides me,
Loves me ev'ry day the same, Even calls me by my name.

Day by day, at home, away. Jesus is my staff and stay.
When I hunger, Jesus feeds me, Into pleasant pastures leads me:
When I thirst, He bids me go Where the quiet waters flow.

Who so happy as I am, Even now the Shepherd's lamb?
And when my short life is ended, By His angel host attended,
He shall fold me to His breast, There within His arms to rest.

SERMON

"The True Test of Greatness"

Matthew 18:1-20

(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.

(Be seated)

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

(Rise)

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Pastor: Blessed Lord, you have promised that where two or three are gathered in your name, you are in the midst of them. Hear the prayers of your people, and grant our supplications.

Brief silence

Pastor: O Lord, grant to your people courage, that with boldness we may speak your name in witness that sinners may come to faith and repentance and so enjoy the forgiveness of their sins. Give your Church wisdom and strength by your Spirit, that she may be steadfast and unmovable in your Word and truth. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: O Lord, by the work of your Spirit, make each of us, your people, to be humble in all our ways. Grant us childlike faith that trusts in you. Grant us to be meek and mild, soft spoken and kind in our relationships with others. Help us to become evermore the children of God. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: O Lord, be present among your people to serve us with the gifts of your grace, and grant that we may receive them with joy. Give to us faithful pastors and church workers who will minister to us in your name and strengthen our faith and life together as your baptized people. Bless our Together in Mission partners, Pastor Ferry and Rachel Meyer, that your kingdom may be extended. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: O Lord, give to us good and honest leaders who will govern according to your Word and will. Give us grace, that we may act as good citizens and good neighbors to one another. Give peace to the nations, and bring an end to violence, prejudice and racism. Guide us to respect all life, from the infant in the womb to the frail and aged. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: O Lord, you have given the day for work and the night for rest. Bless all honest labor and industry, artists and artisans, and those in caring professions. Keep us in humility, and guard us against pride and arrogance. Give to us a spirit of generosity, that we may share with others the blessings that flow from our labors. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: O Lord, you are the strength of the weak, the healing of the sick, the comfort of those who grieve and the peace of those near death. Hear us on behalf of Don, Jan, Louis, Dawn, Charles, Carol, Debbie, Mary, Dennis, Diane, Arlene, Dorothy, June, Jerry, Cindy, Shirley, Sarah, Gladys, Shirley and Sarah. Bless these and all who struggle, that they may be sustained in their afflictions, comforted in life and death, and delivered to everlasting life. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: O Lord, teach us to forgive others as you have forgiven us and bless the fellowship of the forgiven, that we may be united in faith and life. Bless us as we commune today upon the body and blood of our Savior, that our lives will profess the hope and grace found in Christ. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: O Lord, deliver us from pandemic and pestilence, from disaster and danger, and from a sudden death, that kept in faith, we may be preserved through this mortal life and finally be received into the arms of your mercy and the blessings of everlasting life. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Hear us, O Lord, who cry to you in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ, whom with the Spirit, you are one God and one Lord, now and forevermore.

People: Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

People: 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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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 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 #524 "How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds"

How sweet the name of Jesus sounds In a believer's ear!
It soothes our sorrows, heals our wounds, And drives away our fear.

It makes the wounded spirit whole And calms the heart's unrest;
'Tis manna to the hungry soul and to the weary, rest.

Dear name! The rock on which I build, My shield and hiding place;
My never failing treasury filled With boundless stores of grace.

O Jesus, shepherd, guardian, friend, My Prophet, Priest, and King,
My Lord, my life, my way, my end, Accept the praise I bring.

How weak the effort of my heart, How cold my warmest thought!
But when I see Thee as Thou art, I'll praise Thee as I ought.

Till then I would Thy love proclaim With ev'ry fleeting breath;
And may the music of Thy name Refresh my soul in death!

HYMN #605

"Father Welcomes"

Refrain: Father welcomes all His children To His fam'ly through His Son.
Father giving His salvation, Life forever has been won.

Little children, come to Me, For My kingdom is of these.
Life and love I have to give, Mercy for your sin. **Refrain**

In the water, in the Word, In His promise, be assured;
Those who are baptized and believe Shall be born again. **Refrain**

Let us daily die to sin; Let us daily rise with Him.
Walk in the love of Christ our Lord, Live in the peace of God. **Refrain**

HYMN #643

"Sent Forth by God's Blessing"

Sent forth by God's blessing, Our true faith confessing,
The people of God from His dwelling take leave.

The Supper is ended. O now be extended
The fruits of this service in all who believe.

The seed of His teaching, Receptive souls reaching,
Shall blossom in action for God and for all. His grace did invite us,
His love shall unite us To work for God's kingdom and answer His call.

With praise and thanksgiving To God ever living,
The tasks of our ev'ry day life we will face.

Our faith ever sharing, In love ever caring,
Embracing His children of each tribe and race.

With Your feast You feed us, With Your light now lead us;
Unite us as one in this life that we share. Then may all the living
With praise and thanksgiving Give honor to Christ and His name that we bear.

COMMON DISMISSAL

(Rise)

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Let us pray. O God the Father, the fountain and source of all goodness, who in loving-kindness sent your only-begotten Son to humbly offer His life for our salvation, we thank you for the forgiveness and renewal of life you have given us in His body and blood. Send us forth to humbly share with others that which we have here received; 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: It is good to give thanks to the LORD,

People: to sing praises to your name, O Most High;

Pastor: to declare your steadfast love in the morning,

People: and your faithfulness by night.

Pastor: The Most High God now sends us out to praise His name and declare His love wherever we go! United together in Christ's mission, let us share His grace and forgiveness with all people! 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.

CLOSING HYMN #920 "Forth in the Peace of Christ We Go"

Forth in the peace of Christ we go; Christ to the world with joy we bring;
Christ in our minds, Christ on our lips, Christ in our hearts, the world's true king.

King of our hearts, Christ makes us kings; Kingship with Him His servants gain;
With Christ the Servant Lord of all, Christ's world we serve to share Christ's reign.

Priests of the world, Christ sends us forth This world of time to consecrate,
This world of sin by grace to heal, Christ's world in Christ to recreate.

Christ's are our lips, His Word we speak; Prophets are we whose deeds proclaim
Christ's truth in love that we may be Christ in the world, to spread Christ's name.

We are the Church; Christ bids us show That in His Church all nations find
Their hearth and home where Christ restores
True peace, true love to all mankind.

Preacher
Liturgist
Lectors
Director of Parish Music

Pastor Harold Bender
Pastor Noah Kegley
Bob Reynolds, Jen White
Michelle Prince

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