

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Delight in Difficulty
September 2 & 3, 2023

AS WE GATHER

“Your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart” (Jeremiah 15:16). The prophet Jeremiah did not praise God with such words because his life was super easy. No, Jeremiah rejoiced in the Lord even as his life had plenty of problems. Why such delight in difficulty? Surrounded by evil in this world, like Jeremiah, we cling to the God who is good, learning to trust His Word as the means by which we receive His deliverance from our enemies of sin and death. The living, active, delightful voice of our Savior guarantees His ongoing presence in our life. Because of this, we rejoice! As we gather in the presence of Jesus this day, let us echo Jeremiah’s anthem of praise: “Your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart!”

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

Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another,
as God in Christ forgave you. Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children.
Ephesians 4:32-5:1

HANDSHAKES & HUGS

✠ PREPARATION ✠

OPENING HYMN #842 “Son of God, Eternal Savior”

(Rise)

INVOCATION

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

People: Amen.

1

CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Since we are gathered to delight ourselves in the Word of God and to assemble as one family around His Table, let us with repentant hearts confess our sins before our heavenly Father, seeking His forgiveness in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

We pause for a moment of silent prayer and confession.

Pastor: O Lord our God, hear us as we pray:

People: We confess that we have not walked in your faithfulness, turning away from you when we should be turning toward you.

Pastor: Father, forgive us.

People: Our love has not been genuine. We have not overcome evil with good.

Pastor: Have mercy upon us, Lord Jesus.

People: The grace you tell us to share with both our friends and our enemies is the mercy we also need.

Pastor: Renew us, Spirit of truth.

People: Remove our transgressions from us so that we may live as those who have been called by your name, delighting in your goodness to us in Christ. Amen.

Pastor: “I am with you to save you and deliver you,” declares the Lord. Through Jesus Christ—crucified, risen, and coming again—you have been delivered from your enemies of sin, death, and the devil. Keep His saving, steadfast love before your eyes and walk by faith in His promises. As one called to be your pastor and commissioned by Jesus to deliver the delight of His Word, 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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Refrain: This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain,
whose blood set us free to be people of God. **Refrain**

Power, riches, wisdom, and strength,
and honor, blessing, and glory are His. **Refrain**

2 continued

Sing with all the people of God, and join in the hymn of all creation:
Blessing, honor, glory, and might be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen. **Refrain**

For the Lamb who was slain has begun His reign. Alleluia.
This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

SALUTATION & PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Let us pray. Almighty God, your Son willingly endured the agony and shame of the cross to redeem His enemies and make them His friends.

People: Grant us courage to take up our cross daily and follow Him wherever He leads;

Pastor: 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 *Jeremiah 15:15–21* (“I am with you to save you and deliver you.”) ¹⁵O LORD, you know; remember me and visit me, and take vengeance for me on my persecutors. In your forbearance take me not away; know that for your sake I bear reproach. ¹⁶Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart, for I am called by your name, O LORD, God of hosts. ¹⁷I did not sit in the company of revelers, nor did I rejoice; I sat alone, because your hand was upon me, for you had filled me with indignation. ¹⁸Why is my pain unceasing, my wound incurable, refusing to be healed? Will you be to me like a deceitful brook, like waters that fail? ¹⁹Therefore thus says the LORD: “If you return, I will restore you, and you shall stand before me. If you utter what is precious, and not what is worthless, you shall be as my mouth. They shall turn to you, but you shall not turn to them. ²⁰And I will make you to this people a fortified wall of bronze; they will fight against you, but they shall not prevail over you, for I am with you to save you and deliver you, declares the LORD. ²¹I will deliver you out of the hand of the wicked, and redeem you from the grasp of the ruthless.”

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE *Romans 12:9–21* (“Overcome evil with good.”)

⁹Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. ¹⁰Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. ¹¹Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. ¹²Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. ¹³Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality. ¹⁴Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. ¹⁵Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. ¹⁶Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. ¹⁷Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. ¹⁸If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. ¹⁹Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” ²⁰To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” ²¹Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

(Rise)

HOLY GOSPEL *Matthew 16:21–28* (Losing life and finding it in Christ.)

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

People: Glory to you, O Lord.

²¹From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. ²²And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you.” ²³But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.” ²⁴Then Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. ²⁵For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. ²⁶For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? ²⁷For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done. ²⁸Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, O Christ.

(Be seated)

CHILDREN'S SONG & CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

"Jesus Loves the Little Children" TOSBB 19

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. *Repeat*

SERMON HYMN #702 "My Faith Looks Up To Thee"

My faith looks up to Thee, Thou Lamb of Calvary, Savior divine.
Now hear me while I pray; Take all my guilt away:
O let me from this day Be wholly Thine!

May Thy rich grace impart Strength to my fainting heart; My zeal inspire!
As Thou hast died for me, Oh, may my love to Thee
Pure, warm, and changeless be, A living fire!

While life's dark maze I tread And griefs around me spread, Be Thou my guide;
Bid darkness turn to day, Wipe sorrow's tears away,
Nor let me ever stray From Thee aside!

When ends life's transient dream,
When death's cold, sullen stream Shall o'er me roll,
Blest Savior, then, in love, Fear and distrust remove;
O bear me safe above, A ransomed soul!

SERMON

(Rise)

NICENE CREED

People: I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.
And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried.

People: And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.
And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets.
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

(Be seated)

OFFERINGS 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.

(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.
Bearer of all things, teach your faithful ones to trust so fully in your fatherly care that are able to bear the crosses the world puts in their lives. Teach them how to deny themselves and follow you. Help them to remember that you have already carried the cross for us, and will be there for our crosses as well. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: O Lord, you have made us feast on your Word to the delight of our hearts. Keep us from the worldly company of revelers who despise your Word, and inspire the pastors of your Church to brazenly proclaim what is precious: the Gospel of your Son, Jesus Christ. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Heavenly Father, open wide the hearts of Christians to one another, especially within the home and between neighbors. Let love be genuine, speech truthful and patience constant. Let us commend ourselves in everything as those known by God's love and, therefore, unashamed to serve one another. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Be with Debra and Roland Stefanic, as well as Pam and Jeff Krahn and their families as they mourn Nancy Cesar. Be with them as they mourn, reminding them that because your Son lives Nancy too lives. Help them to look forward to the return of your Son, when he will call her out of her grave and into your marvelous light. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Preserve our nation, its leaders and those who serve for the good of our people and for their protection. Grant peace in our time, O Lord, for you alone fight for us. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Great Physician, heal and restore. We especially remember Brittany Bouche's mother Pam, Janice, Bill, Marga, Caitlin, Nadia, Chris, Ardis, Noah, Guy, Mike, Don, Pat, Shirley, Tom, Jill, Janet, Norma, Vern, Amy, Cathy, Cindy, Dorothy, Helga, Carol, June, Jerry, Shirley and Sarah. Give them your holy care and strength to bear their crosses, that they may endure to see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: O Lord, lead us to repentance and faith, that we might not think more highly of ourselves than is right, but that we would set our hearts and minds on the things of God. Prepare us to receive the blessed gifts of our Lord's table, by which you preserve us holy and blameless in Christ until He comes again. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Rise up, O Lord, and avenge those who are persecuted for the name of your Son, Jesus. In communion with all your saints, grant us endurance to bear our crosses as Christ bore His for us. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: All these things and whatever else you know that we need, grant us, Father, for the sake of Him who died and rose again and now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever.

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

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 #547

"The Lamb"

The Lamb, the Lamb, O Father, where's the sacrifice?

Faith sees, believes God will provide the Lamb of price!

Refrain Worthy is the Lamb whose death makes me His own!

The Lamb is reigning on His throne!

The Lamb, the Lamb, One perfect final offering.

The Lamb, the Lamb, Let earth join heav'n His praise to sing. **Refrain**

The Lamb, the Lamb, As wayward sheep their shepherd kill

So still, His will On our behalf the Law to fill. **Refrain**

He sighs, He dies, He takes my sin and wretchedness.

He lives, forgives, He gives me His own righteousness. **Refrain**

He rose, He rose, My heart with thanks now overflows.

His song prolong Till ev'ry heart to Him belong. **Refrain**

HYMN #631 “Here, O My Lord, I See Thee Face to Face”

Here, O my Lord, I see Thee face to face;
Here would I touch and handle things unseen;
Here grasp with firmer hand the eternal grace,
And all my weariness upon Thee lean.

Here would I feed upon the bread of God,
Here drink with Thee the royal wine of heav’n;
Here would I lay aside each earthly load,
Here taste afresh the calm of sin forgiv’n.

This is the hour of banquet and of song;
This is the heav’nly table spread for me;
Here let me feast and, feasting, still prolong
The brief bright hour of fellowship with Thee.

I have no help but Thine;
nor do I need Another arm but Thine to lean upon.
It is enough, my Lord, enough indeed;
My strength is in Thy might, Thy might alone.

Mine is the sin, but Thine the righteousness;
Mine is the guilt, but Thine the cleansing blood;
Here is my robe, my refuge, and my peace:
The blood, Thy righteousness, O Lord, my God.

Too soon we rise; the vessels disappear;
The feast, though not the love, is past and gone;
The bread and wine remove, but Thou art here;
Nearer than ever; still my shield and sun.

Feast after feast thus comes and passes by,
Yet, passing, points to that glad feast above,
Giving sweet foretaste of the festal joy,
The Lamb’s great marriage feast of bliss and love.

HYMN #549 “All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name”

All hail the pow’r of Jesus’ name! Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem And crown Him Lord of all.
Bring forth the royal diadem And crown Him Lord of all.

Crown Him, ye martyrs of our God, Who from His altar call;
Extol the stem of Jesse’s rod And crown Him Lord of all.
Extol the stem of Jesse’s rod And crown Him Lord of all.

Ye seed of Israel’s chosen race, Ye ransomed from the fall,
Hail Him who saves you by His grace And crown Him Lord of all.
Hail Him who saves you by His grace And crown Him Lord of all.

Hail Him, ye heirs of David’s line, Whom David Lord did call,
The God incarnate, man divine, And crown Him Lord of all.
The God incarnate, man divine, And crown Him Lord of all.

Sinners, whose love can ne’er forget The wormwood and the gall,
Go, spread your trophies at His feet And crown Him Lord of all.
Go, spread your trophies at His feet And crown Him Lord of all.

Let ev’ry kindred, ev’ry tribe, On this terrestrial ball,
To Him all majesty ascribe And crown Him Lord of all.
To Him all majesty ascribe And crown Him Lord of all.

Oh, that with yonder sacred throng We at His feet may fall!
We’ll join the everlasting song And crown Him Lord of all.
We’ll join the everlasting song And crown Him Lord of all.

COMMON DISMISSAL

(Rise)

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Let us pray. O God the Father, the source of all goodness, who in perfect love sent your only-begotten Son into this world to save and deliver us, we delight in the mercy we have unworthily received. We praise you for the sacred sharing of Jesus’ body and blood and for the victory over the enemies of death and the grave that you offer to all who trust in Him. As we have received, so may we give, extending to others the grace the whole world needs; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

CLOSING SENTENCES

Pastor: Let your love be genuine. Turn from what is evil and hold fast to what is good.

People: Let us see one another as brothers and sisters in Christ!

Pastor: Delight yourself in the Lord even when life is difficult. Hold fast to Jesus. Rejoice in Him!

People: Let us overcome evil with good as we go forth in Jesus’ name.

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.

CLOSING HYMN #848 “Lord, Whose Love Through Humble Service”

Lord, whose love through humble service Bore the weight of human need,
who upon the cross, forsaken, Offered mercy’s perfect deed,
We, your servants, bring the worship Not of voice alone, but heart,
Consecrating to your purpose Ev’ry gift that you impart.

Still your children wander homeless; Still the hungry cry for bread;
Still the captives long for freedom; Still in grief we mourn the dead.
As, O Lord, your deep compassion Healed the sick and freed the soul,
Use the love your Spirit kindles Still to save and make us whole.

As we worship, grant us vision, Till your love’s revealing light
In its height and depth and greatness, Dawns upon our quickened sight,
Making known the needs and burdens your compassion bids us bear,
Stirring us to tireless striving, your abundant life to share.

Called by worship to your service, Forth in your dear name we go,
to the child, the youth, the aged, Love in living deeds to show;
Hope and health, goodwill and comfort, counsel, aid, and peace we give,
that your servants, Lord, in freedom May your mercy know and live.

Preacher
Liturgist
Lectors
Organist

Pastor Josh Grotelueschen
Pastor Harold Bender
Marc Stefanic, Debbie Nier
Olivia Kukor

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