

October 4, 2020

18th Sunday after Pentecost

GATHERING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS (ELW p. 116)

In the name of the Father,

and of the ✝ Son,

and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Most merciful God,

we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.

Amen.

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of ✝ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

Amen.

GATHERING SONG *Awake, My Soul, and with the Sun* (ELW 557)

Awake, My Soul, and with the Sun



1 A - wake, my soul, and with the sun thy
2 All praise to thee, who safe hast kept and
3 Lord, I my vows to thee re - new. Dis -
4 Di - rect, con - trol, sug - gest, this day, all
5 Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise



dai - ly stage of du - ty run; shake off dull sloth, and
hast re - freshed me while I slept. Grant, Lord, when I from
perse my sins as morn - ing dew; guard my first springs of
I de - sign or do or say, that all my pow'rs, with
God, all crea - tures here be - low; praise God a - bove, ye



joy - ful rise to pay thy morn - ing sac - ri - fice.
death shall wake, I may of end - less light par - take.
thought and will; and with thy - self my spir - it fill.
all their might, in thy sole glo - ry may u - nite.
heav'n - ly host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

Text: Thomas Ken, 1637–1711, alt.
Music: MORNING HYMN, François H. Barthélémon, 1741–1808

Words

Awake, My Soul, and with the Sun

1 Awake, my soul, and with the sun
thy daily stage of duty run;
shake off dull sloth, and joyful rise
to pay thy morning sacrifice.

2 All praise to thee, who safe hast kept
and hast refreshed me while I slept.

Grant, Lord, when I from death shall wake,
I may of endless light partake.

3 Lord, I my vows to thee renew.
Disperse my sins as morning dew;
guard my first springs of thought and will;
and with thyself my spirit fill.

4 Direct, control, suggest, this day,
all I design or do or say,
that all my pow'rs, with all their might,
in thy sole glory may unite.

5 Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise God, all creatures here below;
praise God above, ye heav'nly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

GREETING (ELW p. 120)

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY (ELW p. 124)

Let us pray.
Beloved God, from you come all things that are good. Lead us by the inspiration of your Spirit to know those things that are right, and by your merciful guidance, help us to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 5:1-7

A reading from Isaiah.

The prophet sings a sad, parable-like love song about the relationship between God and Israel. In this song Israel is compared to a promising vineyard. Despite God's loving care, the vineyard that is Israel has brought forth "wild grapes" of injustice and distress, when fine grapes of justice and righteousness were expected.

1 Let me sing for my beloved
my love-song concerning his vineyard:
My beloved had a vineyard
on a very fertile hill.

2 He dug it and cleared it of stones,
and planted it with choice vines;
he built a watchtower in the midst of it,
and hewed out a wine vat in it;
he expected it to yield grapes,
but it yielded wild grapes.

3 And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem
and people of Judah,
judge between me
and my vineyard.

4 What more was there to do for my vineyard
that I have not done in it?
When I expected it to yield grapes,
why did it yield wild grapes?

5 And now I will tell you
what I will do to my vineyard.

I will remove its hedge,
and it shall be devoured;
I will break down its wall,
and it shall be trampled down.

6 I will make it a waste;
it shall not be pruned or hoed,
and it shall be overgrown with briars and thorns;
I will also command the clouds
that they rain no rain upon it.

7 For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts
is the house of Israel,
and the people of Judah
are his pleasant planting;
he expected justice,
but saw bloodshed;
righteousness,
but heard a cry!

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 80:7-15

Look down from heaven, O God; behold and tend this vine. (*Ps. 80:14, 15*)

7Restore us, O God of hosts;

let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

**8You have brought a vine out of Egypt;
you cast out the nations and planted it.**

9You cleared the ground for it;
it took root and filled the land.

**10The mountains were covered by its shadow
and the towering cedar trees by its boughs. R**

11You stretched out its tendrils to the sea
and its branches to the river.

**12Why have you broken down its wall,
so that all who pass by pluck off its grapes?**

13The wild boar of the forest has ravaged it,
and the beasts of the field have grazed upon it.

**14Turn now, O God of hosts,
look down from heaven;**

15behold and tend this vine;
preserve what your right | hand has planted. **R**

SECOND READING: Philippians 3:4b-14

A reading from Philippians.

Paul reviews some of his supposed credentials, which no longer have any bearing in comparison to the right relationship he has been given through the death of Christ. The power of Christ's resurrection motivates him to press on toward the ultimate goal, eternal life with Christ.

[Paul writes:] 4bIf anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: 5circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; 6as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

7Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. 8More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ 9and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. 10I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, 11if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

12Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. 13Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, 14I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (ELW p. 124)

**Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.
Lord, to whom shall we go?
You have the words of eternal life.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

GOSPEL: Matthew 21:33-46

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus tells a parable to the religious leaders who are plotting his death, revealing that their plans will, ironically, bring about the fulfillment of scripture.

[Jesus said to the people:] 33“Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. 34When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. 35But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. 36Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. 37Finally he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ 38But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.’ 39So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. 40Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?” 41They said to him, “He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time.”

42Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the scriptures:

‘The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone;
this was the Lord’s doing,
and it is amazing in our eyes’?

43Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom. 44The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.”

45When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. 46They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON (ELW p. 125)

We confess our sins in the presence of God and one another....

One of the traditions I love the most about the Lutheran tradition is that we start most services, and all Communion services with the Confession and forgiveness. I never start off by asking, "Does anyone need to confess your sins this week...". Even saying it seems laughable. Because we all know we are in the same boat. We've all sinned. Most weeks I'll bet we can tangibly name a few, but even if we can't, we know that there are sins we've committed that we aren't even aware of. Sins done. Sins left undone.

We all just stand up and get to it. We confess. Because we know ourselves and we know each other, there is no pause to consider if this week we might need to confess, because we always need to confess.

Today's passages are all about falling short. I was listening to a podcast about these texts, and the speakers basically noted there is no great way to have these texts feel good. These are tough texts. In particular, they are about the religious, good people falling short. The Old Testament passage from Isaiah is written like a song or a poem. The words compare God's hope for God's chosen people to the owner of a vineyard who hoped, when planting good grapes, to yield a great crop. Just as the owner was disappointed by receiving wild grapes, God was disappointed by the actions and behaviors of the Israelites. Despite God's enduring faithfulness.... Creating the world, freeing them from slavery, showing them the promised land, giving them leaders, providing them with food, showering them with miracles. And what does God chosen people do? Time and time again they participated in idolatry, violence and oppression of the poor. A significant portion of the book of Isaiah is the prophet warning God's people that, unless they turn back to God's way and path, bad things will happen to them. And, indeed it does. God's people endure takeovers from Babylon and Assyria and are sent into exile.

Similarly, Jesus tells a parable, a story with images and details that would have been understandable to those from his time about another vineyard owner who had leased his land, as it would have been common to do. Similarly, it would have been a common practice of the time for the landowner to send slaves or workers to collect some crop from the tenants as payment. But the tenants, who, mind you, had received the good fortune of land from the vineyard owner, were only thinking of how to strike it rich. They killed the slaves who came to collect what was owed, and in the end, they killed the son who came to collect what was due with hopes that they could collect the son's heirs.

The religious leaders of Jesus' day couldn't miss the insinuation. Jesus was talking about them. He was pointing out their hypocrisy. He was spelling it out ... that God had given them all sorts of blessings. Then God had sent prophets and leaders to them, but they had turned on those righteous messengers. They had rebelled against what God had called them to do, time and time again. They had acted like they didn't owe God everything. In the end, Jesus predicted what would happen to him. That he, God's one and only Son, would be brutally slaughtered by people who were jealous of His position and blessings.

It's easy for us to look at these passages and think, "Oh, those Jewish leaders didn't get it." Sadly, these passages have been used to promote anti-semitism for generations. But the truth is that these passages aren't really about Jews not "getting it right" or "understanding Jesus." Jesus was a Jew. They were his people and he was them. The passages are about those in authority, the religious leaders, those practicing religion, not really getting it right. It's about people who are going along with religion but missing the heart of who and what God wants us to be about.

For all the things that Christians do to try to evangelize others, I think if we just admitted this truth: that when the Bible is talking about people really messing up, the Biblical authors and Jesus are just as often, if not moreso, talking to the religious people, especially their leaders, as He is about those who are "out there," we would be more successful in our efforts.

We don't want to believe that we are, as a collective unit, wild grapes or like the bad tenants. But, we are. We focus more energy on proving each other wrong as we do about building each other up. As many un-churched people will quickly point out, we are often more likely to be concerned for the future of the institution of the church than we are of the people around us. We think more about the church meeting our needs than seeing how we can make sacrifices to meet the needs of our neighbors. As leaders, we get too caught up on the naysayers and don't show enough appreciation for the encouragers. We all have times when we doubt that God will provide for us.

So each and every week we stand up without question or pause. And we tell the truth about who we are and what we are done. Each week God takes that burden from our hands and fills our hands with the gifts of forgiveness, mercy and grace. And that really is the hope behind these harsh passages today. The book of Isaiah ends as the Israelites return from exile. Indeed, there is still much hard work in front of them. They are rebuilding their nation, their unity and their identity as God's people. But God leads them back and provides guidance as they are restored. And the Gospel... the landowner didn't hold back. The landowner sent his son willingly into a situation where he would be rejected and killed. That's what God did and does for us. Every day, no matter how bleak, broken, hateful and frightening the world is, God keeps sending God's son into our midst. No matter how badly we mess up, God keeps forgiving us and coming to us. Though our sins and failings hurt God and our neighbors, God loves to forgive our sins.

May we go out today with that hope, knowing that whatever we have done, whatever we will do, we rest in the hope of forgiveness.

HYMN OF THE DAY *Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation* (ELW 645)

Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation



1 Christ is made the sure foun - da - tion, Christ, our head and
2 To this tem - ple, where we call you, come, O Lord of
3 Here be - stow on all your ser - vants what they seek from
4 Praise and hon - or to the Fa - ther, praise and hon - or



cor - ner - stone, cho - sen of the Lord and pre - cious,
hosts, and stay; come with all your lov - ing - kind - ness,
you to gain; what they gain from you, for - ev - er
to the Son, praise and hon - or to the Spir - it,



bind - ing all the church in one; ho - ly Zi - on's
hear your peo - ple as they pray; and your full - est
with the bless - ed to re - tain; and here - af - ter
ev - er three and ev - er one: one in might and



help for - ev - er and our con - fi - dence a - lone.
ben - e - dic - tion shed with - in these walls to - day,
in your glo - ry ev - er - more with you to reign.
one in glo - ry while un - end - ing a - ges run!

Words

Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation

1 Christ is made the sure foundation,
Christ, our head and cornerstone,
chosen of the Lord and precious,
binding all the church in one;
holy Zion's help forever
and our confidence alone.

2 To this temple, where we call you,
come, O Lord of hosts, and stay;
come, with all your lovingkindness,
hear your people as they pray;
and your fullest benediction
shed within these walls today.

3 Here bestow on all your servants
what they seek from you to gain;
what they gain from you, forever
with the blessed to retain;
and hereafter in your glory
evermore with you to reign.

4 Praise and honor to the Father,
praise and honor to the Son,
praise and honor to the Spirit,
ever three and ever one:
one in might and one in glory
while unending ages run!

CREED (ELW p. 126)

**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 Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.*
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.**

*Or, “he descended into hell,” another translation of this text in widespread use.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

With confidence in God’s grace and mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

Holy God, you call us to work for peace and justice in your vineyard. Refresh the church with your life, that we may bear fruit through work and service. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Thank you for the abundant harvest of the earth. Bless and care for those whose hands bring the fruits of the earth to the tables of all who hunger. May we be inspired by your servants who cared deeply for your creation (*especially Francis of Assisi, whom we commemorate today*). Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Curb the impulses of greed and pride that lead us to take advantage of others. Grant that world leaders (*especially*) seek the fruits of the kingdom for the good and welfare of all people. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Sustain all who suffer with the promise of new life. Assured of your presence, heal our pain and suffering, and equip us to embrace all bodies aching for wholeness of mind, body, and soul. We call to mind those who are struggling today (*especially*) **Members:** Charlene Wachter, Bob Dieter, Mary Kraft, Marilyn Frisch, Julie & Denny Christensen, Dianne Sanderson, Betty Nelson **Members in Nursing Homes:** Bobbie Elvin, Gene Wachter, Sandra Marsh; **Members in Care Facilities:** Joan Doeden, Adeline Larson, Jean Bender; **Family Members & Friends:** Lois Gruis, Josh Hansen (Mary Ingenthron’s son), Lee Morrison (Terry Morrison’s son), Henrietta Lais, Tom Morgan (Sandy Randall’s dad), Peggy Konold (Norma Radenbaugh’s daughter), Brad Martens (Valerie Veen’s son); **Our service men and women; Our Missionaries:** Chuck & Sybil Rounds in Costa Rica and Love INC. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.** Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all managers in our community and for all who seek employment. Give hope and a future to those who lack meaningful work, those who have been marginalized or abused in the workplace, and those who desire new opportunities. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Thank you for the saints who teach us to live faithfully in your vineyard (*especially Theodor Fliedner, renewer of society*). May our chorus join theirs until our labor is complete. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Listen as we call on you, O God, and enfold in your loving arms all for whom we pray, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING (ELW p. 128)

OFFERING PRAYER (ELW p. 129)

God of all creation, all you have made is good, and your love endures forever. You bring forth bread from the earth and fruit from the vine. Nourish us with these gifts, that we might be for the world signs of your gracious presence in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

DIALOGUE (ELW p. 129)

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE (ELW p. 130)

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ;
who on this day overcame death and the grave,
and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (ELW p. 130)

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.**

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE (ELW p. 130)

You are indeed holy, almighty and merciful God.
You are most holy,
and great is the majesty of your glory.

You so loved the world that you gave your only Son,
so that everyone who believes in him may not perish
but have eternal life.

We give you thanks for his coming into the world
to fulfill for us your holy will
and to accomplish all things for our salvation.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, 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.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Remembering, therefore, his salutary command,
his life-giving passion and death, his glorious resurrection and ascension,
and the promise of his coming again,
we give thanks to you, O Lord God Almighty,
not as we ought but as we are able;
we ask you mercifully to accept our praise and thanksgiving
and with your Word and Holy Spirit to bless us, your servants,
and these your own gifts of bread and wine,
so that we and all who share in the body and blood of Christ
may be filled with heavenly blessing and grace,
and, receiving the forgiveness of sin,
may be formed to live as your holy people
and be given our inheritance with all your saints.

To you, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
be all honor and glory in your holy church, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER (ELW p. 134)

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 (ELW p. 134)

Come to the banquet, for all is now ready.

COMMUNION (ELW p. 134)

The body of Christ, given for you.
The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION (ELW p. 136)

Let us pray.

We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life. In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

SENDING

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

SENDING OF COMMUNION (ELW p. 136)

Gracious God, loving all your family with a mother's tender care:

As you sent the angel to feed Elijah with heavenly bread,
assist those who set forth to share your word and sacrament
with those who are *sick, homebound, and imprisoned*.

In your love and care, nourish and strengthen those who will receive this sacrament,
and give us all the comfort of your abiding presence
through the body and blood of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

BLESSING (ELW p. 136)

Almighty God, Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

Amen.

SENDING SONG *I Heard an Old, Old Story* (TFF 97)

1 I heard an old, old story, how a Savior came from glory,
how he gave his life on Calvary to save a wretch like me;
I heard about his groaning, of his precious blood's atoning,
how Jesus saved me from my sins and won the victory.

Refrain

Oh, victory in Jesus, my Savior, forever!
He sought me and bought me with his redeeming blood;
he loved me ere I knew him, and all my love is due him—
he plunged me to victory beneath the cleansing flood.

2 I heard about his healing, of this cleansing pow'r revealing,
how he made the lame to walk again and caused the blind to see;
and then I cried, "Dear Jesus, come and heal my broken spirit,
and somehow Jesus came and brought to me the victory. (*Refrain*)

3 I heard about a mansion he has built for me in glory,
and I heard about the streets of gold beyond the crystal sea;
about the angels singing and the old redemption story,
and some sweet day I'll sing up there the song of victory. (*Refrain*)

DISMISSAL (ELW p. 137)

Go in peace. Share the good news.
Thanks be to God.