

Worship Bulletin–16th Sunday after Pentecost

September 12, 2021

Gathering Music: “All My Days” (Stewart Townend; BOB 21); “In Christ Alone” (BOB);

Welcome (pastor)

Opening Song (praise style): “Come and Fill Me Up” (BOB 39)

I can feel You flowin’ through me.
Holy Spirit, come and fill me up,
come and fill me up.

Love and mercy fill my senses.
I am thirsty for Your presence, Lord;
come and fill me up.

Lord, let Your mercy wash away all of my sin.
Fill me completely with Your love once again.
I need You. I want You. I love Your presence.
I need You. I want You. I love Your presence.

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Opening Prayer

O God, through suffering and rejection you bring forth our salvation, and by the glory of the cross you transform our lives. Grant that for the sake of the gospel we may turn from the lure of evil, take up our cross, and follow your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Call to Worship (Based on Psalm) 116: 1-9

L: Come! Lift your voices to the Lord, who always hears us.

P: Listen Lord. Hear our voices sing your praises.

L: Call on the Lord, who bends low to hear us.

P: Listen Lord. We lift our voices to you in praise.

L: Call on the name of the Lord, all you people.

P: Listen Lord. We call on your wonderful name. For you saved us, you raised us and turned our lives around. Let your name be praised in this congregation.

Song (based on Psalm): “I will Call upon the Lord” (W&P 70; 2x)

I will call upon the Lord

who is worthy to be praised.

So shall I be saved from my enemies.

I will call upon the Lord.

**The Lord liveth, and blessed be the Rock,
and let the God of my salvation be exalted.**

**The Lord liveth, and blessed be the Rock,
and let the God of my salvation be exalted.**

Scripture Reading: James 3:1-12

This text uses various images to illustrate how damaging and hurtful the way we speak to and about others can be. Not only are we to control our speech, but what we say and how we say it are to reflect our faith.

¹Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers and sisters, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. ²For all of us make many mistakes. Anyone who makes no mistakes in speaking is perfect, able to keep the whole body in check with a bridle. ³If we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we guide their whole bodies. ⁴Or look at ships: though they are so large that it takes strong winds to drive them, yet they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. ⁵So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great exploits. How great a forest is set ablaze by a small fire! ⁶And the tongue is a fire. The tongue is placed among our members as a world of iniquity; it stains the whole body, sets on fire the cycle of nature, and is itself set on fire by hell. ⁷For every species of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by the human species, ⁸but no one can tame the tongue—a restless evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse those who are made in the likeness of God. ¹⁰From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this ought not to be so. ¹¹Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and brackish water? ¹²Can a fig tree, my brothers and sisters, yield olives, or a grapevine figs? No more can salt water yield fresh.

Children’s Message: https://sermons4kids.com/fans_or_followers.htm

Children’s Song (related to message):

I Have Decided to Follow Jesus (v.1)

Gospel Reading: Mark 8: 27-38

This story provides the turning point in Mark’s gospel. Peter is the first human being in the narrative to acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah, but he cannot accept that as the Messiah Jesus will have to suffer.

Moreover, Jesus issues a strong challenge to all by connecting discipleship and the cross.

²⁷Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that I am?” ²⁸And they answered him, “John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.” ²⁹He asked them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered him, “You are the Messiah.” ³⁰And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him. ³¹Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. ³²He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, “Get

behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.”³⁴ He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ³⁵For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. ³⁶For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? ³⁷Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? ³⁸Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

Message (pastor)

Thom Rainer writes the following in his book, “The Post Quarantine Church:”

I love Florida beaches. I have been going to beaches on the Panhandle or in southwest Florida all my life. The sugar-white sand and emerald water make for some of the most beautiful land scapes I have ever seen. Beaches are part of a delicate ecosystem. Many are in a constant state of erosion. More often than not, the erosion is subtle, hardly noticeable month by month or even year by year. Beach residents rarely raise concerns about the slow erosion. When a hurricane hits the beaches, however, the erosion is usually significant and dramatic. Residents and local officials move into urgency mode. After property damage is assessed and repaired, beach restoration follows. The urgency moves many people into action... In the church the slow erosion in most congregations was tied to the drift in their outward focus. Most churches had begun using their resources of time, people, ministries and money to take care of themselves. It was a gradual process. It was not as if the church leaders and members decided one day they would cut back their efforts to reach the community... It was more of a year-by-year process of replacing the Great Commission with a great complacency. As the church turned inward, its connections to the community gradually washed away... COVID-19... is clearly and powerfully a wake-up call... For the most part, churches have seen their outward focus slowly erode. We may not have noticed it clearly before the quarantine. But we're certainly aware of it in these post-quarantine days... The challenge has been laid. We cannot and must not return to the days of comfort and routine. We must move forward with Great Commission obedience and sacrifice... (The Post Quarantine Church, Thom S. Rainer, Tydale Momentum, 47-49.)

Today we are celebrating God's Work Our Hands. Though I don't know the origins of this day, I would imagine that this day was founded for the same reason as detailed by Rainer. Beyond being a day where we celebrate being a part of the ELCA church today, a church body of nearly 4 million members and nearly 10,000 congregations, today is a day where we intentionally remind ourselves that we follow Jesus not just for our own benefit but for the benefit of the world. The ELCA has noted the slow erosion described by Rainer for years. We, too, have come to see (and, in many instances have always seen) that service, love and generosity towards our community does not deter us from our growth... wasting our time, resources and energy as we sometimes fear. Rather, sharing God's grace with the world through tangible actions is part of the solution to our decline.

No, it's not a quick fix. No, you don't serve others to get members. Yes, most people who receive our blessings won't become Lutherans. No, they won't join tomorrow. No, not everyone who becomes connected to us will have lots of money to share.

But, over the years, I have watched several churches think, pray and work intentionally about how they can more deeply love their communities. Despite the extra time, talent and sometimes money spent- the efforts always seem to be life-giving for those involved. Here too. These past few years we have continued to pray and act on ways to love our community: Sharing Seeds food ministry for students and quarantined families, care kits for the Southwest Crisis Center, Friendship suppers, ice cream in the parking lot, the coat ministry, mission trips, services and visitation ministries for member and non-members alike at nursing homes and facilities and more. This is not to mention the many important ways you all love and serve in your daily

lives- through careers, through caring for family and friends, through service in organizations and volunteerism. Though I know these efforts have often been trying, they surely have been in my own life, too, I think most of us would say that these efforts have also been life-giving. Through loving others, our joy and hope has been increased.

I think that's what Jesus was trying to tell us in today's Gospel. In the initial dialogue, Jesus asks the disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" Peter answers, "You are the Messiah." Each week, we gather here with the same confessions on our lips. Jesus is our Messiah. That's why we worship. That's why we pray.

Then, Jesus goes on to explain the type of death he was to die. It's easy to look at Peter and think, "Oh, Peter, you just didn't get it. This was Jesus' mission and it leads to new life for us all." But, Peter's refusal and shock is understandable. Peter had been following Jesus, leaving everything to do so. He loved his teacher and Messiah. Of course, he didn't want Jesus to die a cruel and painful death.

But, then Jesus takes it one step further- not only would he die, but His followers were expected to lay down their lives too. Sometimes that would be literally true as was the case of the disciples.

For many of us, though, we live in a society and place where we enjoy the freedom to believe as we choose and share those beliefs. So, the thought of losing our physical life over our religious beliefs isn't so realistic or probable.

But, I don't think Jesus is referring to just being willing to risk death in order to follow Him. In his words, Jesus is calling us all to not just live our lives for ourselves. We are called to put down our desires for prestige, wealth, comfort, fame and being "right" in order to follow Christ not only through our confessions, but also our words, our actions, our forgiveness, our generosity and our love. Many times this passage has been mis-understood and mis-used by the church and others. By urging us to take up our crosses, Jesus is not urging us to endure abuse. He is not requiring us to not stand up for ourselves and our dignity. Jesus' cross led to new life for the whole world. The crosses we take up should also lead to new life, not just more harm and destruction.

And that is, the promise of today's text. It's the promise we've lived and seen here and the promise churches so often see. "For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it." As we serve today and as we serve each day, we hear Jesus' words loudly and clearly spoken for us. On one hand, what I said is true. On God's Work Our Hands Day, we intentionally remind ourselves that we follow Jesus not just for our own benefit but for the benefit of the world. At the same time, though, as Jesus reminds us, we are not serving so that others will live... We are serving so that we will live.

Song (familiar): "Will You Come and Follow Me" (ELW 798)

"Will you come and follow me if I but call your name?
Will you go where you don't know and never be the same?
Will you let my love be shown, will you let my name be known,
will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?"

"Will you leave yourself behind if I but call your name?
Will you care for cruel and kind and never be the same?
Will you risk the hostile stare, should your life attract or scare?
Will you let me answer pray'r in you and you in me?"

"Will you let the blinded see if I but call your name?"

Will you set the prisoners free and never be the same?
Will you kiss the leper clean, and do such as thins unseen,
and admit to what I mean in you and you in me?"

“Will you love the you you hide if I but call your name?
Will you quell the fear inside and never be the same?
Will you use the faith you’ve found to reshape the world around,
through my sight and through and sound in you and you in me?"

Lord, your summons echoes true when you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you and never be the same.
In your company I’ll go where your love and footsteps show.
Thus I’ll move and live and grow in you and you in me.

Affirmation of Faith

**You, O God, are supreme and holy. You create our world and give us life.
Your purpose overarches everything we do. You have always been with us.
You are God.**

**You, O God, are infinitely generous, good beyond all measure.
You came to us before we came to you. You have revealed and proved
your love for us in Jesus Christ, who lived and died and rose again.
You are with us now. Your are God.**

**You, O God, are Holy Spirit. You empower us to be your gospel in the world.
You reconcile and heal; you overcome death.**

You are our God. We worship you.

A New Zealand Prayer Book

Offering/Special Music (requests and new music): 10,000 Reasons (Matt Redman)

Bless the Lord, O my soul, O my soul,
Worship His holy name.
Sing like never before, O my soul.
I’ll worship Your holy name.

The sun comes up, it’s a new day dawning.
It’s time to sing Your song again.
Whatever may pass and whatever lies before me,
let me be singing when the evening comes.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, O my soul,
Worship His holy name.
Sing like never before, O my soul.
I’ll worship Your holy name.

You’re rich in love and You’re slow to anger.
Your name is great and Your heart is kind.
For all Your goodness, I will keep on singing,
ten thousand reasons for my heart to find.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, O my soul,
Worship His holy name.
Sing like never before, O my soul.
I'll worship Your holy name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, O my soul,
Worship His holy name.
Sing like never before, O my soul.
I'll worship Your holy name;
worship Your holy name;
God I'll worship Your holy name.

Offering Prayer (Season after Pentecost B, TFF)

Generous God, **all good gifts come from your gracious hand. We offer you these, the harvest of our time and labor. Make us wise stewards of all your gifts, that your name may be exalted in all the world, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Prayers (Pastor)

Lord, we pray for churches everywhere that are participating in God's Work Our Hands. Prosper the work of their hands. Lord in your mercy... **Hear our prayer.**

Gracious God, we pray for the children who will receive the bundles of food through Sharing Seeds. May the food strengthen them so they can grow and learn. Lord in your mercy... **Hear our prayer.**

Lord, we pray for the victims who will receive our kits through the Southwest Crisis Center. May you surround them with strength and provision in their time of trauma. Bless the work of the Crisis Center as they support people in a time of tragedy. Give them wisdom and courage. Lord in your mercy... **Hear our prayer.**

God, bless our coat ministry as it begins to take inventory and plan for the year. Give the coordinators energy for their work. Keep all your children warm this winter season. Lord in your mercy... **Hear our prayer.**

Lord, we ask your blessing on all of the cleaning and sorting projects that will happen today. Be with our church as continue to be a place of welcome, growth, learning, support and care. Lord in your mercy... **Hear our prayer.**

God, be with all who receive the cards that are made today. Help us to continually find ways to reach out to all in love and care. Lord in your mercy... **Hear our prayer.**

Lord, we remember those who are sick or suffering in any way. We especially remember **Members:** Linda Towne, Al Luing, Janice Berger, Sandy Rogers, Todd Hallstrom, Charlene Wachter, Marilyn Frisch, Julie & Denny Christensen, Dianne Sanderson, Betty Nelson; **Members in Nursing Homes:** Bob Dieter, Don Grant, Albert Mattisen, Bobbie Elvin, Sandra Marsh; **Members in Care Facilities:** Joan Doeden, Jean Bender; **Family Members & Friends:** Arlene (Fern Burmeister's sister), Rita Zinnel (Natalie's mom), Butch Zeiner (Valerie Veen's brother), Maverick Thalberg (Fern Burmeister's great-grandson), Josh Hansen (Mary Ingenthron's son), Lee Morrison (Terry Morrison's son), Henrietta Lais, Tom Morgan (Sandy Randall's dad), Brad Martens (Valerie Veen's son); **Our service men and women and Love INC.** Lord in your mercy... **Hear our prayer.**

Into your hands we remember all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy. Amen.

Lord's Prayer (trad.)

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.

Blessing (Nathan Nettleton; laughingbird.net)

Go out with your minds set on the things of God. Take up your cross and follow Jesus. See to it that the words of your mouths and the thoughts of your hearts are acceptable to God and enlightening to all.

And may God make the holy Word known to you; May Christ Jesus lead you in the ways of sacrificial love; and may the Holy Spirit set you ablaze with divine wisdom.

We go in peace to love and serve the Lord, *In the name of Christ. Amen.*

Sending Song (praise style): "Go in Peace and Serve the Lord" (W&P 46; 2x)

Go in peace and serve the Lord.

God is calling you today.

Go and tell gospel news ev'rywhere.

God in peace and serve the Lord.

God is calling you today

to bring truth and love to ev'ry nation.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

FELC SCHEDULE FOR September 13-19, 2021

Monday - 13	9:00AM 6:00PM	BULLETIN DEADLINE Worship & Music Team
Tuesday - 14	2:00PM 7:00PM	GriefShare Day Care Association Meeting
Wednesday - 15	6:00PM 6:30PM 6:30PM	Worship 7 th & 8 th Grade Confirmation Card Ministry
Thursday - 16	9:30AM	Hannah Circle
Friday - 17		Pastor's Day Off
Saturday – 18		
Sunday - 19	9:00AM	Worship – Country Western Service



24th ANNUAL COUNTRY WESTERN SERVICE
September 19, 2021; 9:00 AM
Join us in person or Facebook Live for an amazing service.

