



SEPTEMBER 13, 2020
FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

A Place for Everyone . . .

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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

The *congregation*, or participants, *respond* with the lines in *bold type*.

PRELUDE

THE GATHERING

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

☐ Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☐ one God, who creates, redeems, and sustains us and all of creation.

☑ Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

☐ Faithful God ,

☑ have mercy on us. We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We turn from your loving embrace and go our own ways. We pass judgment on one another before examining ourselves. We place our own needs before those of our neighbors. We keep your gift of salvation to ourselves. Make us humble, cast away our transgressions, and turn us again to life in you through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

☐ God hears the cries of all who call out in need, and through his death and resurrection, Christ has made us his own. Hear the truth that God proclaims: Your sins are forgiven in the name of ✚ Jesus Christ. Led by the Holy Spirit, live in freedom and newness to do God's work in the world.

☑ Amen.

GATHERING HYMN (ELW 834, VERSES 1 & 4)

Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise



1 Im - mor - tal, in - vis - i - ble, God on - ly wise,
2 Un - rest - ing, un - hast - ing, and si - lent as light,
3 To all, life thou giv - est, to both great and small;
4 Thou reign - est in glo - ry; thou dwell - est in light;



in light in - ac - ces - si - ble hid from our eyes,
nor want - ing, nor wast - ing, thou rul - est in might;
in all life thou liv - est, the true life of all;
thine an - gels a - dore thee, all veil - ing their sight;



most bless - ed, most glo - rious, the An - cient of Days,
thy jus - tice like moun - tains high soar - ing a - bove
we blos - som and flour - ish like leaves on the tree,
all laud we would ren - der; oh, help us to see



al - might - y, vic - to - rious, thy great name we praise!
thy clouds which are foun - tains of good - ness and love.
and with - er and per - ish, but naught chang - eth thee.
'tis on - ly the splen - dor of light hid - eth thee!

Text: Walter Chalmers Smith, 1824–1908, alt.
Music: ST. DENIO, Welsh traditional

GREETING

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

C And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

☞ Let us pray. O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

☞ **Amen.**

WORD

FIRST READING: ROMANS 14:1-12

¹Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. ²Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. ⁴Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

⁵Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. ⁶Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God.

⁷We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

¹⁰Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹For it is written,

“As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall give praise to God.”

¹²So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

L The word of the Lord.

G Thanks be to God.

PSALM 103:1-13

L / **G** by whole verse

¹Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me,
bless God’s holy name.

²**Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all God’s
benefits—**

³who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases;

⁴**who redeems your life from the grave and crowns you
with steadfast love and mercy;**

⁵who satisfies your desires with good things so that your
youth is renewed like an eagle’s.

⁶**O LORD, you provide vindication and justice for all
who are oppressed.**

⁷You made known your ways to Moses and your works to
the children of Israel.

⁸**LORD, you are full of compassion and mercy, slow to
anger and abounding in steadfast love;**

⁹you will not always accuse us, nor will you keep your an-
ger forever.

¹⁰**You have not dealt with us according to our sins, nor
repaid us according to our iniquities.**

¹¹For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is
your steadfast love for those who fear you.

¹²**As far as the east is from the west, so far have you re-
moved our transgressions from us.**

¹³As a father has compassion for his children, so you have
compassion for those who fear you, O LORD.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

MUSICAL OFFERING

GOSPEL: MATTHEW 18:21-35

📖 The Gospel according to Matthew.

🎵 Glory to you, O Lord.

²¹Peter came and said to [Jesus], “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” ²²Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

²³“For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; ²⁵and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. ²⁶So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’

²⁷And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, ‘Pay what you owe.’ ²⁹Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’

³⁰But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place.

³²Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³Should you not have had mercy on your fellow

slave, as I had mercy on you?’³⁴ And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt.³⁵ So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON: Doing the Math on Forgiveness

(Silence for a time of reflection)

HYMN OF THE DAY (ELW 604 VERSES 1 & 5)

O Christ, Our Hope



1 O Christ, our hope, our hearts' de - sire, cre - a - tion's
 2 How vast your mer - cy to ac - cept the bur - den
 3 But now the bonds of death are burst, the ran - som
 4 Oh, let your might - y love pre - vail to purge us
 5 All praise to you, as - cend - ed Lord; all glo - ry



might-y Lord, re - deem - er of the fall - en world, by
 of our sin, and bow your head in cru - el death to
 has been paid; you reign a - bove at God's right hand, in
 of our pride, that we may stand be - fore your throne by
 ev - er be to Fa - ther, Son, and Spir - it blest through



ho - ly love out - poured, by ho - ly love out - poured:
 make us clean with - in, to make us clean with - in.
 robes of light ar - rayed, in robes of light ar - rayed.
 mer - cy pu - ri - fied, by mer - cy pu - ri - fied.
 all e - ter - ni - ty, through all e - ter - ni - ty!

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

☒ Drawn together in the compassion of God, we pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence.

☒ You welcome us when we are weak in faith. Uphold your church throughout the world; make it a place of welcome. Strengthen faith through Bible studies and Sunday schools, confirmation classes and youth ministries. Nurture new ministries of education and growth. Lord, in your mercy,

☑ **hear our prayer.**

☒ The heights of the heavens show us the vastness of your steadfast love. Have compassion on your creation. Where human selfishness has brought ruin and destruction, we look to you to heal, renew, and redeem your world. Lord, in your mercy,

☑ **hear our prayer.**

☒ Make your ways known to the nations. Speak kindness to our bitter grudges. Settle our hearts when we want to settle accounts with violence. Bless our leaders with patience and wisdom. Lord, in your mercy,

☑ **hear our prayer.**

☒ Bring healing and justice wherever harm is dealt. Provide vindication for all who are oppressed. Free victims of human trafficking and forced labor; deliver all who are bound by debt. Feed all who hunger, and guard refugees fleeing famine, poverty, and war (*especially*). Lord, in your mercy,

☑ **hear our prayer.**

L Teach us to forgive. Remind us that you do not always accuse us. Still our tongues when we are tempted to pass judgment and argue over opinions. Make this congregation a community of mercy for one another and for all our neighbors. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

L Whether we live or whether we die, we are yours. We thank you for those who have showed us faithfulness, for the knees that taught us how to bow to you and the tongues that taught us to praise you. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P All these things and whatever else you see that we need, we entrust to your mercy; through Christ our Lord.

C Amen.

THE LITURGY OF THE COMMUNION MEAL

THE OFFERING

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

P Let us pray. Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. You have set before us these gifts of your good creation. Prepare us for your heavenly banquet, nourish us with this rich food and drink, and send us forth to set tables in the midst of a suffering world, through the bread of life, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.

DIALOGUE

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Lift up your hearts.

C We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C It is right to give our thanks and praise.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

P 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.

Let us pray the prayer Jesus taught us:

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.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P Come to the banquet table where Christ gives himself as food and drink.

The elements were given as you entered.

P Please peel the top film and take your bread.
The body of Christ given for you.

C Amen.

P Open your cup by peeling back the foil.
The blood of Christ shed for you.

C Amen.

P The body and blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C Amen.

THE LITURGY OF SENDING FOR SERVICE

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

P Let us pray. We give you thanks, gracious God, that you have once again fed us with food beyond compare, the body and blood of Christ. Lead us from this place, nourished and forgiven, into your beloved vineyard to wipe away the tears of all who hunger and thirst, guided by the example of the same Jesus Christ and led by the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

C Amen.

BLESSING

P Mothering God, Father, **+** Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you and lead you into the way of truth and life.

C Amen.

DISMISSAL

A Go in peace. Remember the poor.

C Thanks be to God. We will!

POSTLUDE

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