

The Liturgy of the Word
The Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 13, 2020
Grace Episcopal Church

Opening

Officiant Christ has no body on earth now but yours, no hands but yours, no feet but yours; yours are the eyes through which he looks with compassion on the world; yours are the feet with which he walks to do good; yours are the hands with which he blesses all the world. *Theresa of Avila*

Prelude *Sonate IV, Andante Religioso* Mendelssohn

Opening Acclamation and Collect for Purity

Celebrant Blessed be the one, Holy and Living God.

People **Glory to God forever and ever. Amen.**

Celebrant Let us pray.

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Song of Praise *A Song of Creation, part one* EOW 25

Glorify the Lord, all you works of the Lord, *
sing praise and give honor for ever.
In the high vault of heaven, glorify the Lord, *
sing praise and give honor for ever.
Glorify the Lord, you angels and all powers of the Lord, *
O heavens and all waters above the heavens.
Sun and moon and stars of the sky, glorify the Lord, *
sing praise and give honor for ever.
Glorify the Lord, every shower of rain and fall of dew, *
all winds and fire and heat.

Winter and summer, glorify the Lord, *
sing praise and give honor for ever.
Glorify the Lord, O chill and cold, *
drops of dew and flakes of snow.
Frost and cold, ice and sleet, glorify the Lord, *
sing praise and give honor for ever.
Glorify the Lord, O nights and days, *
O shining light and enfolding dark.
Storm clouds and thunderbolts, glorify the Lord, *
sing praise and give honor for ever.

Collect of the Day

Celebrant The Lord be with you.
People **And also with you.**
Celebrant Let us pray.

O God, because without you we are not able to please you, mercifully grant that your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The First Lesson Genesis 50:15-21

Reader A reading from the book of Genesis.

Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, 'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

Reader The Word of the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 103

Reader Let us say together this portion of Psalm 103

1 Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and all that is within me, bless his holy Name.

2 Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and forget not all his benefits.

3 He forgives all your sins
and heals all your infirmities;

4 He redeems your life from the grave
and crowns you with mercy and loving-kindness;

5 He satisfies you with good things,
and your youth is renewed like an eagle's.

6 The Lord executes righteousness
and judgment for all who are oppressed.

7 He made his ways known to Moses
and his works to the children of Israel.

8 The Lord is full of compassion and mercy,
slow to anger and of great kindness.

9 He will not always accuse us,
nor will he keep his anger for ever.

10 He has not dealt with us according to our sins,
nor rewarded us according to our wickedness.

11 For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so is his mercy great upon those who fear him.

12 As far as the east is from the west,
so far has he removed our sins from us.

13 As a father cares for his children,
so does the Lord care for those who fear him.

The Second Lesson Romans 14:1-12

Reader A reading from Paul's letter to the Romans.

Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. Those 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. Who 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. Some 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. Those 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. We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If 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. For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. Why 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. For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

Anthem

Non Nobis, Domine

arr. John Hooker

The Gospel Matthew 18:21-35

Reader A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew.

Peter 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?” Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times. “For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, 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. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But 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.’ Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

Reader The Word of the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

The Rev. April Berends

The Nicene Creed

BCP 358

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Hymn

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

Hymnal 390

The Prayers of the People

Intercessor:

Holy God, Creator of both heaven and earth, you have spread your abundance throughout the ends of the earth. We lift our prayers to you, O God.

You are the hope of all creation.

We pray for Donald, our president, the leaders of the nations, and all who make decisions as the peoples of the earth clamor for resources. Inspire us to do justice, preparing the way for your glorious reign. We lift our prayers to you, O God;

You are the hope of all creation.

Send your Spirit to disturb and challenge us, that we may wisely share the fruits of the earth, and pattern our common life in ways that honor your creation and promote sustainable communities and ecosystems. We lift our prayers to you, O God;

You are the hope of all creation.

Teach us to grieve with you, O Christ, the loss of all the beauty that is being killed, and give us the will to protect species in danger of extinction. May we embrace your charge to watch over and care for all the creatures of the earth. We lift our prayers to you, O God;

You are the hope of all creation.

For all who live in poverty, sickness, loneliness and grief, that you will wipe the tears from their faces. We pray especially for Judy, Bethann, Will, Breezie, Julie, Dwight, Angela, James and Barbara, Ann, Trevor, Emily, Ted, Deb, Michael, Chuck and Jason and their children, Tom, Jeanette, Jane, Bo and Mary Minor, Helen, Nancy, Charlotte, Tyler, Jeff, Rebecca, J.R., Marcia, Peggy, Jean, William, Timothy, Donald, Robert, Cooper, Sally, Charles, Jonathan, Steven, John, Libby, Elaine, Jean, Barbara, Elizabeth, John, Joyce, Jim, Mary Ruth, and Ann;

We pray for Wil, Jake, Kevin, Tripp, Mike, Alexander, Russel, Logan, Jim, Sean, Evan, and all of our Armed Forces, here and abroad;

We pray for Bren who is deployed as a nurse in the pandemic.

We pray for Janine and Angela, who are with child.

We pray for all whose homes are in peril or uprooted because of climate change, for all displaced because of hurricanes, fires or other disasters.

We pray for all who remain on the front lines of this pandemic: for health care providers, those who grow and process food, staff grocery stores, provide transit, transport supplies, care for the young and the aged and those who are sick. We pray for all suffering from illness, those who have died, and all who grieve as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. We lift our prayers to you, O God;

You are the hope of all creation.

We remember before you those who are dying and those who have died, Give us strength in your victory over death to grow into your way of love, which does not know despair but sows seeds of hope. We lift our prayers to you, O God;

You are the hope of all creation.

Sustaining God, you visit the land and prepare the grain providing for the earth and all its inhabitants.

As we consider the lilies of the field and the whole of creation, the earth and the heavens formed by your gracious hand, make our hearts grateful for that which you have entrusted to our care, that we may steward your abundance with wisdom and compassion. **Amen.**

Confession and Absolution

Merciful and sustaining God, we have sinned against you.

**We confess our lack of gratitude for the beauty and bounty of your creation:
teach us to see that your earth sustains us and all that lives.**

We confess that we have misused your earth: grant us amendment of life.

We confess that we have been intemperate in our appetites: strengthen us in self-control.

We confess that we have taken the abundance of your world for granted: make us urgent now for its protection. Forgive and renew us now through our Savior Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit, with whom you live and reign, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Officiant Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through the grace of Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

The Peace

Celebrant The peace of the Lord be always with you.
People **And also with you.**

The Blessing

Postlude

Capriccio in D

Georg Böhm

Worship Leaders

Officiants	The Rev. April Berends, The Rev. David Burman
Preacher	The Rev. April Berends
Lectors	Sean McEwen, Dick McGee
Intercessors	David Stanislaski and Vivian Dodds
Organist	Patrick Rice
Director of Music	David Long
Singers	Steven Hinkle, David Long, Elizabeth Schrock, Janelle Wagoner, Trevor Wagoner
Video	Richard Lanham, Janelle Wagoner

Announcements

Join Us for Online Worship at 9am & 10:45am Sundays

During this time of Social Distancing, we will continue to stream videos for Morning Prayer worship on our [Facebook](#) page and [website](#) at 9am and again at 10:45am. Bulletins for each week's service will be sent along with the Grace Notes weekend issue, and will be posted on the website alongside the video for the service. If you miss the 9am or 10:45am video streams, you can always go back and watch later.

Clergy Outdoor Office Hours

This week, the Rev David Burman will be in the courtyard from 1:00pm to 4:00pm today, Sunday, September 13th. The Rev. April Berends will hold office hours on September, 17th from 10:00am to noon. Wear a mask, and stop by for conversation or a prayer. Thanks to all who have visited so far; the priests of Grace have enjoyed catching up with you. As always, you may email either of the priests (aberends@saygrace.net or dburman@saygrace.net) to set up a time for a socially-distanced conversation.

Sacred Ground Dialogues around Racial Healing

Beginning this Wednesday, September 16th, Grace will begin Sacred Ground, a small-group experience centered on racial healing. Developed as part of the Episcopal Church's "Becoming Beloved Community" initiative, Sacred Ground focuses on issues of race and racism and the difficult, transformative conversations that we need to have around these issues. Sacred Ground sessions invite participants to understand the racial history of this country and the church in order to faithfully respond to the challenges around race that surround us today.

The series uses material from a variety of documentary films and readings, as well as scholars and practitioners working toward racial healing. Sacred Ground is designed to work best in "dialogue circles," groups of individuals committed to being in conversation with one another for a series of ten weeks. You can find a wealth of information about the Sacred Ground curriculum, including the syllabus [here](#). Currently, we would expect one Sacred Ground circle to gather virtually on Wednesday nights at 7pm. We still have a few spots left in this group. If we have enough interest, we will also hold a second dialogue circle. Please email Rev. April at aberends@saygrace if you are interested in joining a dialogue circle/

Morning Prayer and Compline

All are invited to escape from the madness and rest your mind and soul via Morning Prayer on weekdays and Saturday at 9:00 a.m., and services of Compline at 8:00 p.m. each evening. We all need reminders of essential realities that transcend the medical and political context in which we find ourselves.

Here are the links for Daily Morning Prayer and Compline:

[Weekday Morning Prayer](#)

[Weekday Compline](#)

Community Care in Anxious Times

Grace check-in team leaders are continuing to contact parishioners via phone, text and/ or email. Please take a moment to pick up or write back to let them know if you're okay and/or if you need help, pastorally or physically. The leaders of these groups will be in close communication with our priests and our network of volunteers. If you are a new member of Grace and we do not have your information in the directory, please fill out the New Member form [here](#) and let us know if you would like to be added to a check-in group. If you have an urgent pastoral need, please call the parish office at (423)243-3250 and leave a message on the **main line**. We will be checking these messages regularly even if we aren't in the office.