

October 18, 2020 – 11:00 AM

20th Sunday after Pentecost

PRELUDE *"His Eye Is On the Sparrow"* Music by S.A. Martin

WELCOME AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR GOD'S KINGDOM

CONFESION AND FORGIVENESS

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.

MISSION PROCLAMATION

Our mission at Epiphany is
Follow Christ. Live Faithfully. Serve All. Thanks be to God.

GATHERING SONG

"God Is Here!"

ELW #526

1 God is here! As we find your people meet to of - fer
2 Here are here! sym - bols to - in to our life - long
3 Here our chil - dren find a - the an - Shep - herd's
4 Lord of all, of church and - dom, in the age of

praise and prayer, may we find in full - er men - sure -
need of grace; here we are in - able, foot, and pul - pit;
flock and fold; here as bread and wine are the tak - en,
change and doubt, keep us fa - thul to the gos - pel;
what it is cross in Christ we share. Here, as in the the
here the is - has - cen - trial share place. Here, as in the the
Christ sas - tions us us - al - of place. Here, as in the the
help us work your par - pose out. Here, as in the the
world a - round us, all here our var - ied skills and arts
ty of the preach - ing, here seek in in - si - led as in speech,
of the Ser - vant all we wor - ship to give, ex - plore
ded - i - ca - tion, we have to re - ceive;

wait the com - ing of the Spir - it in - to o - pen minds and hearts.
 here, in new - ness and re - new - al, God the Spir - it comes to each,
 what it means in dai - ly liv - ing to be - lieve and to a - dore.
 we, who can - not live with - out you, we a - dore you! We be - lieve!

GREETING

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

Let us pray.

Sovereign God, raise your throne in our hearts. Created by you, let us live in your image; created for you, let us act for your glory; redeemed by you, let us give you what is yours, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

FIRST READING: *Isaiah 45:1-7*

The prophet announces that Cyrus the Persian emperor is the one the LORD has anointed to end Israel's exile. The LORD makes this choice so that the whole world will recognize this LORD as the only God. Persia had a god of light and a god of darkness; the LORD claims sovereignty over both light and darkness.

¹Thus says the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus,
 whose right hand I have grasped
 to subdue nations before him
 and strip kings of their robes,
 to open doors before him—
 and the gates shall not be closed:

²I will go before you
 and level the mountains,
 I will break in pieces the doors of bronze
 and cut through the bars of iron,
³I will give you the treasures of darkness
 and riches hidden in secret places,
 so that you may know that it is I, the LORD,
 the God of Israel, who call you by your name.
⁴For the sake of my servant Jacob,
 and Israel my chosen,
 I call you by your name,
 I surname you, though you do not know me.
⁵I am the LORD, and there is no other;
 besides me there is no god.
 I arm you, though you do not know me,
⁶so that they may know, from the rising of the sun
 and from the west, that there is no one besides me;
 I am the LORD, and there is no other.
⁷I form light and create darkness,
 I make weal and create woe;
 I the LORD do all these things.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: *Psalm 96:1-9 [10-13]; refrain, Ps. 96:7*

As - crie to the LORD hon - or and power.

¹Sing to the LORD a new song;
 sing to the LORD, | all the earth.

²Sing to the LORD, bless the name | of the LORD;
proclaim God's salvation from | day to day.

³Declare God's glory a- | mong the nations
and God's wonders a- | mong all peoples.

⁴For great is the LORD and greatly | to be praised,
more to be feared | than all gods. R

⁵As for all the gods of the nations, they | are but idols;
but you, O LORD, have | made the heavens.

⁶Majesty and magnificence are | in your presence;
power and splendor are in your | sanctuary.

⁷Ascribe to the LORD, you families | of the peoples,
ascribe to the LORD hon- | or and power.

⁸Ascribe to the LORD the honor due the | holy name;
bring offerings and enter the courts | of the LORD. R

⁹Worship the LORD in the beau- | ty of holiness;
tremble before the LORD, | all the earth.

¹⁰Tell it out among the nations: "The | LORD is king!
The one who made the world so firm that it cannot be moved
will judge the peo- | ples with equity."

¹¹Let the heavens rejoice, and let the | earth be glad;
let the sea thunder and all that is in it;
let the field be joyful and all that | is therein.

¹²Then shall all the trees of the wood
shout for joy at your com- | ing, O LORD,
for you come to | judge the earth.

¹³You will judge the | world with righteousness
and the peoples | with your truth. R

SECOND READING: *1 Thessalonians 1:1-10*

Most likely this letter is the first written by Paul. Paul gives pastoral encouragement and reassurances to new Christians living in an antagonistic environment. Their commitment of faith, love, and hope makes them a model for other new Christian communities.

¹Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace.

²We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly ³remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴For we know, brothers and sisters beloved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵because our message of the gospel came to you not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of persons we proved to be among you for your sake. ⁶And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite of persecution you received the word with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit, ⁷so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. ⁸For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith in God has become known, so that we have no need to speak about it. ⁹For the people of those regions report about us what kind of welcome we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God, ¹⁰and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath that is coming.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: *Matthew 22:15-22*

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

After Jesus begins teaching in the temple, religious leaders try to trap him with questions. First they ask if God's people should pay taxes to an earthly tyrant like Caesar.

¹⁵Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap [Jesus] in what he said. ¹⁶So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality. ¹⁷Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?” ¹⁸But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, “Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? ¹⁹Show me the coin used for the tax.” And they brought him a denarius. ²⁰Then he said to them, “Whose head is this, and whose title?” ²¹They answered, “The emperor’s.” Then he said to them, “Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” ²²When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.

The gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Pastor Nyahaley Labor

HYMN OF THE DAY

“Lift Every Voice and Sing”

ELW #841
(See Insert)

APOSTLES’ CREED

**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.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

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

A brief silence.

Gracious God, you call us by name and invite us to share your good news. Send your Holy Spirit among preachers, missionaries, and evangelists. We give thanks for the witness of your servant Luke, the evangelist, whom the church commemorates today. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of praise, the heavens and all creation declare your salvation. From the rising of the sun to its setting, may the whole universe show forth your

goodness. Raise up devoted stewards of all that you have made. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of all, may your word of justice sound forth in every place. Restore divided nations and communities with reconciling truth. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of light, we pray for those living with pain, illness, isolation, grief, anger, or doubt (*especially*). Join their voices in a new song, assuring them that you call them each by name. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of truth, you show no partiality. May your spirit guide the work of justices, magistrates, court officials, and all vocations of the law, that your promise of restoration may be known. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Living God, as you raised Jesus from the dead, so raise up those who have died in you (*especially*). We give thanks for their witness, confident of your rescuing welcome for all. 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.

OFFERTORY

“Soon and Very Soon”

Words & Music by

Andre Crouch, Sung by Mary Lou Gomes

OFFERING PRAYER

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. **Amen.**

LITANY IN THE ABSENCE OF THE LORD’S SUPPER

P: We are isolated and separated.

C: This is for the good of all, but it is painful and lonely.

P: In this time when we are not sharing the Lord's Supper,

C: We know our hunger for your grace even more palpably.

P: This meal – its forgiveness, healing, solidarity, and abundance --

C: is meant for all.

P: This feast is meant to be shared in person, in community,

C: because your love is an embodied reality, given and shed for all.

P: So we wait, listen, watch, even more intently than usual,

C: For the crisis to pass,

P: for your creatures to live in greater harmony,

C: for your Word to become flesh again, among us again in this sacrament.

P: Let us sing in anticipation of the day we return to each other in person,

C: Amen!

C: "My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament of the altar. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart ... I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You."

GREAT THANKSGIVING

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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

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.

LORD'S PRAYER

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.

BLESSING

God bless us with discomfort at easy answers, half-truths, and superficial relationships, so that we may live deep within our hearts.

God bless us with anger at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people, so that we may work for justice, freedom and peace.

God bless us with tears to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation and war, so that we may reach out our hands to comfort them and turn their pain into joy.

And God bless us with enough foolishness to believe that we can make a difference in this world, so that we can do what others claim cannot be done.

The God of all grace **☩** bless you now and forever.
Amen.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

SENDING/DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

SONG #1

"Here Is Bread"

ELW #483

Here is bread, here is wine, Christ is with us, he is with us.
Here is grace, here is peace, Christ is with us, he is with us.
Here we are, joined in one, Christ is with us, he is with us.

5 Break the bread, taste the wine, Christ is with us here.
Know his grace, find his peace, feast on Je-sus here.
We'll pro-claim till he comes, Je-sus glo-ri-fied.

10 —

In this bread there is heal-ing. In this cup is life for-ev-er.

14 In this mo-ment, by the Spir-it, Christ is with us here.

SONG #2

"Lord, Be Glorified"

ELW #744

1 In my life, Lord, be glo-ri-fied, be glo-ri-fied;
2 In our song, Lord, be glo-ri-fied, be glo-ri-fied;
3 In your church, Lord, be glo-ri-fied, be glo-ri-fied;
4 In your world, Lord, be glo-ri-fied, be glo-ri-fied;

5 in my life, Lord, be glo-ri-fied to-day.
in our song, Lord, be glo-ri-fied to-day.
in your church, Lord, be glo-ri-fied to-day.
in your world, Lord, be glo-ri-fied to-day.

SONG #3

"We Give Thee but Thine Own"

ELW #686

SONG #4

"You Servants of God"

ELW #825

Epiphany Lutheran Church
2375 Georgia Highway 20, SE
Conyers, GA 30013



HOLY COMMUNION

October 18, 2020 – 11:00 AM