

Epiphany Lutheran Church  
2375 GA Hwy 20 SE, Conyers, GA 30013  
(770) 483-6222

[www.conyerselc.org](http://www.conyerselc.org)

October 18, 2020 – 11:00 AM

20<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

## PRELUDE

*“His Eye Is On the Sparrow”*

Music by S.A. Martin

## WELCOME AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR GOD'S KINGDOM

## CONFESSION 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 your peo - ple meet to of - fer  
2 Here are sym - bols re - mind us of life - long  
3 Here our chil - dren find a wel - come in the Shep - herd's  
4 Lord of all, of church and king - dom, in an age of

praise and prayer, may we find in full - er mea - sure  
need of grace; here are ta - ble, font, and pul - pit;  
flock and fold; here as bread and wine are tak - en;  
change and doubt, keep us faith - ful to the gos - pel;

what it is in Christ we share. Here, as in the  
here the cross has cen - tral place. Here, in hon - es -  
Christ sus - tains us as of old. Here, the ser - vants  
help us work your par - pose out. Here, in this day's

world a - round us, all our var - ied skills and arts  
ty of preach - ing, here in si - lence, as in speech,  
of the Ser - vant seek in wor - ship to ex - plore  
dod - i - ca - tion, all we have to give, re - ceive;



## 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.*

<sup>1</sup>Thus 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:

<sup>2</sup>I will go before you  
and level the mountains,  
I will break in pieces the doors of bronze  
and cut through the bars of iron,  
<sup>3</sup>I 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.  
<sup>4</sup>For 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.  
<sup>5</sup>I am the LORD, and there is no other;  
besides me there is no god.  
I arm you, though you do not know me,  
<sup>6</sup>so 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.  
<sup>7</sup>I 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



<sup>1</sup>Sing to the LORD| a new song;  
sing to the LORD, | all the earth.

<sup>2</sup>**Sing to the LORD, bless the name | of the LORD;  
proclaim God’s salvation from | day to day.**

<sup>3</sup>Declare God’s glory a- | mong the nations  
and God’s wonders a- | mong all peoples.

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

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

<sup>6</sup>**Majesty and magnificence are | in your presence;  
power and splendor are in your | sanctuary.**

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

<sup>8</sup>**Ascribe to the LORD the honor due the | holy name;  
bring offerings and enter the courts | of the LORD. R**

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

<sup>10</sup>**Tell 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.”**

<sup>11</sup>Let 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.

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

<sup>13</sup>You 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.*

<sup>1</sup>Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,  
To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace.

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

<sup>4</sup>For we know, brothers and sisters beloved by God, that he has chosen you, <sup>5</sup>because 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. <sup>6</sup>And 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, <sup>7</sup>so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. <sup>8</sup>For 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. <sup>9</sup>For 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, <sup>10</sup>and 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.*

<sup>15</sup>Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap [Jesus] in what he said. <sup>16</sup>So 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. <sup>17</sup>Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?” <sup>18</sup>But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, “Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? <sup>19</sup>Show me the coin used for the tax.” And they brought him a denarius. <sup>20</sup>Then he said to them, “Whose head is this, and whose title?” <sup>21</sup>They 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.” <sup>22</sup>When 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 cill 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;


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



1 We give thee but thine own, what - e'er the gift may be;  
 2 May we thy boun - ties thus as stew - ards true re - ceive,  
 3 The cap - tive to re - lease, to God the lost to bring,  
 4 And we be - lieve thy word, though dim our faith may be:



all that we have is thine a - lone, a trust, O Lord, from thee.  
 and glad - ly, as thou bless - est us, to thee our first - fruits give.  
 to teach the way of life and peace—it is a Christ-like thing.  
 what - e'er we do for thine, O Lord, we do it un - to thee.


## SONG #4

## "You Servants of God"

ELW #825



1 You ser - vants of God, your Mas - ter pro - claim, and pub - lish a -  
 2 As - cend - ed on high, al - might - y to save, yet still he is  
 3 Sal - va - tion to God who sits on the throne! Let all cry a -  
 4 Then let us a - dore and give him his right, all glo - ry and



broad his won - der - ful name; the name, all - vic - to - rious, of  
 nigh, his pres - ence we have. The great con - gre - ga - tion his  
 loud and hon - or the Son. The prais - es of Je - sus the  
 pow'r and wis - dom and might, all hon - or and bless - ing, with



Je - sus ex - tol; his king - dom is glo - rious and rules o - ver all!  
 tri - umph shall sing, as - crib - ing sal - va - tion to Je - sus, our king!  
 an - gels pro - claim, fall down on their fac - es, and wor - ship the Lamb.  
 an - gels a - bove, and thanks nev - er ceas - ing, and in - fin - ite love!



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## **HOLY COMMUNION**

**October 18, 2020 – 11:00 AM**