



**Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 27, 2020**

**The Rev. Dr. William O. Gafkjen
Bishop**



Indiana-Kentucky Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost
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Jesus' parable about two sons who don't do what they say reveals surprises in the reign of God. In the reading from Ezekiel the people claim the ways of the Lord are unfair, while God offers repentance and new life.

WELCOME Bishop William O. Gafkjen

GREETING Carol Webb

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

☞ You are the treasured people of the Lord,

☞ **a people holy to the Lord our God.**

☞ Keep the words of the Lord in your heart; teach them to your children.

☞ **Talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise.**

☞ One does not live by bread alone,

☞ **but by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.**

SONG *Amazing Grace*, sung by Gina Moore, a member of Grace and Peace Lutheran Church in Evansville, Indiana.

PRAYER OF THE DAY April Lynch

☞ Let us pray.

God of love, giver of life, you know our faults. Give us your grace to overcome them, keep us from those things that harm us, and guide us in the way of salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

☞ **Amen.**

FIRST READING: Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32 Pastor Nancy Nyland

¹The word of the Lord came to me: ²What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, "The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge"? ³As I live, says the Lord God, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. ⁴Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins that shall die.

²⁵Yet you say, "The way of the Lord is unfair." Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? ²⁶When the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed they shall die. ²⁷Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have

committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. ²⁸Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. ²⁹Yet the house of Israel says, “The way of the Lord is unfair.” O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair?

³⁰Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord God. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin. ³¹Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? ³²For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord God. Turn, then, and live.

📖 The word of the Lord.

🙏 **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL: Matthew 21:23-32 Pastor Heather Apel

📖 The Holy Gospel According to St. Matthew, the 21st Chapter

🙏 **Glory be to you, O Lord.**

²³When [Jesus] entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, “By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?” ²⁴Jesus said to them, “I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?” And they argued with one another, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say to us, ‘Why then did you not believe him?’ ²⁶But if we say, ‘Of human origin,’ we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet.” ²⁷So they answered Jesus, “We do not know.” And he said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

²⁸“What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ ²⁹He answered, ‘I will not’; but later he changed his mind and went. ³⁰The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, ‘I go, sir’; but he did not go. ³¹Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. ³²For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.”

📖 This is the Gospel of the Lord.

🙏 **Praise be to you, O Christ.**

SERMON Bishop William O. Gafkjen

SONG ELW 538 *The Lord Now Sends Us Forth*, played and sung by Pastor Bimen Limbong and his children, Hannah, Samuel, and Petra Limbong, from Christ Lutheran Church, Jeffersontown, Kentucky.

RESPONSE TO THE WORD Deacon Cory Driver

- In Christ, you have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation,
- We believe in him and are marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit.**
- Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.
- I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again 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**

- Build yourselves up on your most holy faith;
- pray in the Holy Spirit.**
- Keep yourselves in the love of God;
- look forward to the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ.**
- If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation:
- Everything old has passed away; behold, everything has become new!**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION Susie Swenson

God has given us the ministry of reconciliation. Therefore, let us be reconciled to God and to one another.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

℣ Gracious God,

☩ **have mercy on us. In your compassion, forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things done and left undone. Uphold us by your Spirit so that we live and serve you in newness of life to the honor and glory of your holy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

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

☩ **Amen.**

℣ Sisters and brothers, rejoice. Mend your ways, encourage one another, agree with one another, live in peace. The peace of the Lord be with us always.

OFFERING Pastor Jerry O'Neal

℣ Let us pray. God, our Creator, you open wide your hand and satisfy the desire of every living creature. We bless you for your nurture and care. Help us to delight in your will and walk in your ways, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH Pastor Dan Fugate

Each portion of the prayers concludes with these words:

℣ ...Lord in your mercy,

☩ **hear our prayer.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

℣ Let us pray with confidence in the words our Savior gave us:

☩ **Our Father in heaven,**

hallowed be your name,

your kingdom come,

your will be done,

on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial

and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the

glory are yours, now and forever. Amen

BENEDICTION Bishop William O. Gafkjen

☒ Almighty God, Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

☒ Amen.

DISMISSAL

☒ Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

☒ **Thanks be to God.**

Special thanks to Gina Moore and the Limbong family for sharing the gift of music with us.

Service Participants

Bishop William O. Gafkjen

Pastor Heather Apel, Assistant to the Bishop for Leadership

Pastor Dan Fugate, Assistant to the Bishop for Discipleship

Pastor Nancy Nyland, Director for Evangelical Mission

Deacon Cory Driver, Ph.D., Director, Transformational Leadership Academy

Pastor Jerry O'Neal, Stewardship Director

Susie Swenson, Synod Storyteller

April Lynch, Administrative Assistant to the Bishop

Sue Miller, Synod Accountant

Carol Webb, Administrative Assistant to Pastors Fugate, Nyland, and O'Neal

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