

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (A)

Sunday, September 27, 2020

PRELUDE

Fugue in D minor

Johann Pachelbel (1653 - 1706)

WELCOME

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

In the name of the Father,
and of the ✠ Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom 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 Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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

Most merciful God,

we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.

Amen.

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

GATHERING SONG

At the Name of Jesus

#416



1 At the name of Je - sus ev - 'ry knee shall bow,
2 At his voice cre - a - tion sprang at once to sight,
3 Hum - bled for a sea - son, to re - ceive a name
4 In your hearts en - throne him; there let him sub - due
5 Chris - tians, this Lord Je - sus shall re - turn a - gain



ev - 'ry tongue con - fess him king of glo - ry now.
all the an - gel fac - es, all the hosts of light,
from the lips of sin - ners un - to whom he came,
all that is not ho - ly, all that is not true.
on the clouds of glo - ry, with his an - gel train;



It is God's good plea - sure we should call him Lord,
thrones and dom - i - na - tions, stars up - on their way,
faith - ful - ly he bore it spot - less to the last;
Crown him as your cap - tain in temp - ta - tion's hour;
for all wreaths of em - pire meet up - on his brow,



who from the be - gin - ning was the might - y Word.
all the heav'n - ly or - ders in their great ar - ray.
brought it back vic - to - rious when from death he passed.
let his will en - fold you in its light and pow'r.
and our hearts con - fess him king of glo - ry now.

Text: Caroline M. Noel, 1817-1877

Music: KING'S WESTON, Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1872-1958

Music from *Songs of Praise*, © Oxford University Press 1925.

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.

God of love, giver of life, you know our frailties and failings. 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.

INTRODUCTION TO THE READINGS

Pastor Johanna Rehbaum

First Reading: Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

Ezekiel challenges those who think they cannot change because of what their parents were and did, or who think they cannot reverse their own previous behavior. God insistently invites people to turn and live.

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.

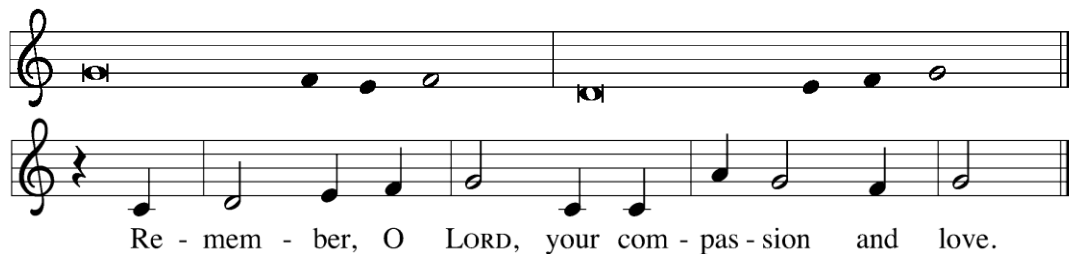
²⁵Yet you say, “The way of the Lord is unfair.” Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? ²⁶When the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed they shall die. ²⁷Again, when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

PSALM: Psalm 25:1-9



¹To | you, O LORD,

I lift | up my soul.

²**My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be | put to shame,
nor let my enemies triumph | over me.**

³Let none who look to you be | put to shame;
rather let those be put to shame | who are treacherous.

⁴**Show me your | ways, O LORD,
and teach | me your paths. R**

Continued on next page...

⁵Lead me in your | truth and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all | the day long.

⁶**Remember, O LORD, your compas- | sion and love,
for they are from | everlasting.**

⁷Remember not the sins of my youth and | my transgressions;
remember me according to your steadfast love and for the sake of your good- | ness,

O LORD.

⁸**You are gracious and up- | right, O LORD;
therefore you teach sinners | in your way.**

⁹You lead the low- | ly in justice
and teach the low- | ly your way. **R**

Second Reading: Philippians 2:1-13

As part of a call for harmony rather than self-seeking, Paul uses a very early Christian hymn that extols the selflessness of Christ in his obedient death on the cross. Christ's selfless perspective is to be the essential perspective we share as the foundation for Christian accord.

¹If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, ²make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. ⁴Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. ⁵Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

⁶who, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
as something to be exploited,

⁷but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
being born in human likeness.

And being found in human form,

⁸he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death—
even death on a cross.

⁹Therefore God also highly exalted him
and gave him the name
that is above every name,

¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

¹¹and every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

¹²Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; ¹³for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Alleluia. Open our | hearts, O Lord,* to give heed to what is said | by your Son. *Alleluia.*

GOSPEL: Matthew 21:23-32

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

After driving the moneychangers out of the temple (21:12), Jesus begins teaching there. His authority is questioned by the religious leaders, who are supposed to be in charge of the temple.

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.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Pastor Johanna Rehbaum

REFLECTION (provided by ELCA, <https://blogs.elca.org/worship/2812/>)

Though the Ten Commandments say that punishment for the iniquity of parents will go on to the third and fourth generation, the prophet Ezekiel says otherwise. We shall be punished for only our own sins. Then the prophet counsels us to get a new heart. This prophetic word is still very hard: our own sins are way enough for serious punishment. Like the sons in the parable, we are often the ones who boldly say yes to the will of God and then do nothing. And how shall we get a new heart? But the Gospel according to Matthew has begun to turn toward the story of the cross, and in this Sunday's narrative Jesus stands in the temple, mysterious in his authority, warning the world's authorities, and showing mercy to serious outsiders and sinners. Paul shows us where that mystery goes: through Christ's death and resurrection, God is at work in us. For a new heart, we are together given the mind of Christ. There is indeed much consolation, compassion and sharing of the Spirit in this word. Starting again, in humility, we may look to the needs of others in a profoundly needy world.

HYMN OF THE DAY

Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service

#712



- 1 Lord, whose love in hum-ble ser-vice bore the weight of hu-man need,
- 2 Still your chil-dren wan-der home-less; still the hun-gry cry for bread;
- 3 As we wor-ship, grant us vi-sion, till your love's re-veal-ing light
- 4 Called by wor-ship to your ser-vice, forth in your dear name we go,



who up-on the cross, for-sak-en, worked your mer-cy's per-fect deed;
still the cap-tives long for free-dom; still in grief we mourn our dead.
in its height and depth and great-ness dawns up-on our quick-ened sight,
to the child, the youth, the a-ged, love in liv-ing deeds to show;



we, your ser-vants, bring the wor-ship not of voice a-lone, but heart;
As you, Lord, in deep com-pas-sion healed the sick and freed the soul,
mak-ing known the needs and bur-dens your com-pas-sion bids us bear,
hope and health, good-will and com-fort, coun-sel, aid, and peace we give,



con-se-crat-ing to your pur-pose ev-'ry gift which you im-part.
by your Spir-it send your pow-er to our world to make it whole.
stir-ring us to ar-dent ser-vice, your a-bun-dant life to share.
that your ser-vants, Lord, in free-dom may your mer-cy know and live.

Text: Albert F. Bayly, 1901–1984

Music: BEACH SPRING, *The Sacred Harp*, Philadelphia, 1844

Text © Oxford University Press

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,

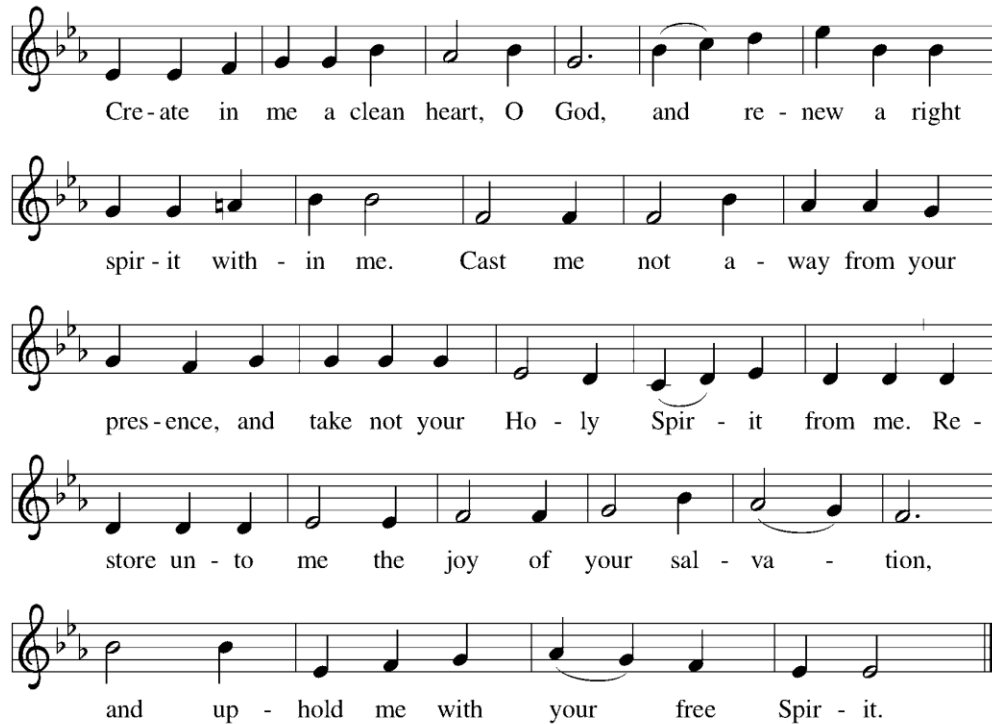
and the life everlasting. Amen.

OFFERING

*This time may be used to make a gift online, or write a check to be mailed in,
to sustain the ministries of the Church.*

OFFERTORY *Sonata No. 3, Op. 65, II. Andante tranquillo* Felix Mendelssohn (1809 - 1847)

OFFERTORY HYMN



Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right
spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your
pres - ence, and take not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re -
store un - to me the joy of your sal - va - tion,
and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

Music: J. A. Freylinghausen, 1670–1739

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Response: ...Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one in the 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.

PASSING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

Share peace with those around you or online, or write down the name of someone you will text or call later to check up on them and spread Christ's peace to them.

MOMENTS FOR MISSION

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.

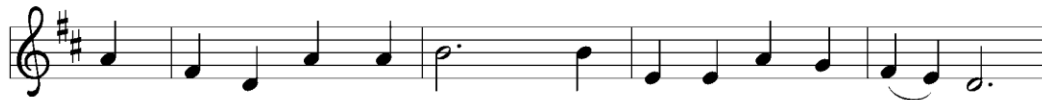
The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

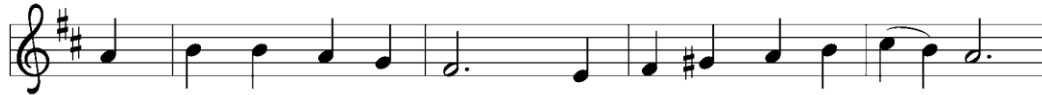
Amen.

SENDING SONG*O God, My Faithful God*

#806



1 O God, my faith - ful God, true foun-tain ev - er flow - ing,
2 Give me the strength to do with read - y heart and will - ing
3 Keep me from say - ing words that lat - er need re - call - ing;
4 When dan-gers gath - er round, oh, keep me calm and fear - less;



with - out whom noth - ing is, all per - fect gifts be - stow - ing:
what - ev - er you com - mand, my call - ing here ful - fill - ing—
guard me, lest i - dle speech may from my lips be fall - ing;
help me to bear the cross when life seems dark and cheer - less;



give me a health - y frame, and may I have with - in
to do it when I ought, with all my might—and bless
but when, with - in my place, I must and ought to speak,
help me, as you have taught, to love both great and small,



a con - science free from blame, a soul un - stained by sin.
what - ev - er I have wrought, for you must give suc - cess.
then to my words give grace, lest I of - fend the weak.
and, by your Spir - it's might, to live at peace with all.

Text: Johann Heermann, 1585–1647; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.
Music: WAS FRAG ICH NACH DER WELT, Ahasuerus Fritsch, 1629–1701

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE*Fanfare*

Emma Louise Ashford (1850 - 1930)

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Psalm 25:6

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