



ST. PAUL'S
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Sunday, September 13, 2020
Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

11:00 a.m. Digital Worship

www.facebook.com/SPLutherville and www.stpaulslutherville.org

GATHERING

WELCOME

Welcome to our simple worship service to gather as a community online since we can't gather in person! If you haven't already done so, take a moment to quiet your space by turning down/off other devices, lighting a candle, grabbing your Bible, and breathe a bit before we start.

If you're joining the live feed, comment to "say hello" and connect with one another. Feel free to use the "share" button so others can join in, and to help spread the reach of our ministry!

PRELUDE: *Make Me a Servant* by Kelly Willard

RINGING OF THE BELL

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.

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.

GATHERING SONG: *Come As You Are* by: Ben Glover | David Crowder | Matt Maher

Come out of sadness from wherever you've been
Come broken-hearted let rescue begin
Come find your mercy ~ O sinner come kneel
Earth has no sorrow that Heaven can't heal
Earth has no sorrow that Heaven can't heal

So lay down your burdens lay down your shame
All who are broken lift up your face
O wanderer come home ~ You're not too far
So lay down your hurt lay down your heart
Come as you are

There's hope for the hopeless
And all those who've strayed
Come sit at the table come taste the grace
There's rest for the weary ~ Rest that endures
Earth has no sorrow that Heaven can't cure

So lay down your burdens lay down your shame
All who are broken lift up your face
O wanderer come home ~ You're not too far
So lay down your hurt lay down your heart
Come as you are

Come as you are ~ Fall in His arms ~ Come as you are

There's joy for the morning O sinner be still
Earth has no sorrow that Heaven can't heal
Earth has no sorrow that Heaven can't heal

So lay down your burdens lay down your shame
All who are broken lift up your face
O wanderer come home ~ You're not too far
So lay down your hurt lay down your heart
Come as you are

Come as you are ~ Come as you are ~ Come as you are

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. O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

WORD

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Children of all ages are welcome to come and gather close to the screen to join in a message just for them! After we pray together, they will be invited to rejoin others in their home for the readings.

FIRST READING: Genesis 50:15-21

After Jacob's death the brothers of Joseph begged for forgiveness for the crime they had done against him. You intended to do me harm, Joseph said, but God used this as an opportunity to do good and save many lives.

¹⁵Realizing 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?" ¹⁶So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, ¹⁷'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. ¹⁸Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." ¹⁹But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰Even 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. ²¹So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 103:1-13

A reading from the Psalms.

- ¹Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and all that is within me, bless God's holy name.
- ²Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and forget not all God's benefits—
- ³who forgives all your sins
and heals all your diseases;
- ⁴who redeems your life from the grave
and crowns you with steadfast love and mercy;
- ⁵who satisfies your desires with good things
so that your youth is renewed like an eagle's.
- ⁶O LORD, you provide vindication
and justice for all who are oppressed.
- ⁷You made known your ways to Moses
and your works to the children of Israel.
- ⁸LORD, you are full of compassion and mercy,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love;
- ⁹you will not always accuse us,
nor will you keep your anger forever.
- ¹⁰You have not dealt with us according to our sins,

nor repaid us according to our iniquities.

¹¹For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so great is your steadfast love for those who fear you.

¹²As far as the east is from the west,
so far have you removed our transgressions from us.

¹³As a father has compassion for his children,
so you have compassion for those who fear you, O LORD.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING: Romans 14:1-12

This Christian community has significant struggles with diversity. Here Paul helps us understand that despite different practices in worship and personal piety, we do not judge one another. All Christians belong to the Lord Jesus Christ who died for all of us and will judge each of us.

A reading from Paul's letter to the Romans.

Paul writes: ¹Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. ²Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³Those 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. ⁴Who 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.

⁵Some 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. ⁶Those 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.

⁷We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸If 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. ⁹For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

¹⁰Why 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. ¹¹For it is written,

“As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall give praise to God.”

¹²So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: Matthew 18:21-35

When Peter asks about the limits of forgiveness, Jesus responds with a parable that suggests human forgiveness should mirror the unlimited mercy of God.

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus said to the disciples: ¹⁵“If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. ¹⁶But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. ¹⁷If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. ¹⁸Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. ¹⁹Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. ²⁰For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.”

²¹Then Peter came and said to him, “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” ²²Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

²³“For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; ²⁵and, 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. ²⁶So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ ²⁷And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸But 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.’ ²⁹Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ ³⁰But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³²Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ ³⁴And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY: *Create in Me a Clean Heart* (author Unknown, Based on Psalm 51)

Create in me a clean heart, oh God. And renew a right spirit within me

Create in me a clean heart, oh God. And renew a right spirit within me

Cast me not away from Thy presence, O Lord ~ And take not Thy Holy Spirit from Me

Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation ~ And renew a right spirit within me

Create in me a clean heart, oh God. And renew a right spirit within me

Create in me a clean heart, oh God. And renew a right spirit within me

Cast me not away from Thy presence, O Lord ~ And take not Thy Holy Spirit from Me

Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation ~ And renew a right spirit within me

And renew a right spirit within me ~ And renew a right spirit within me

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.

Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Drawn together in the compassion of God, we pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

You welcome us when we are weak in faith. Uphold your church throughout the world; make it a place of welcome. Strengthen faith through Bible studies and Sunday schools, confirmation classes and youth ministries. Nurture new ministries of education and growth. We pray for leaders throughout the whole Church: for our church-wide bishop, Elizabeth, and our local bishop, William. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

The heights of the heavens show us the vastness of your steadfast love. Have compassion on your creation. Where human selfishness has brought ruin and destruction, we look to you to heal, renew, and redeem your world. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Make your ways known to the nations. Speak kindness to our bitter grudges. Settle our hearts when we want to settle accounts with violence. Bless our leaders with patience and wisdom. We pray for the service women and men of our country, and for peace-keepers and peace-makers everywhere. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Bring healing and justice wherever harm is dealt. Provide vindication for all who are oppressed. Free victims of human trafficking and forced labor; deliver all who are bound by debt. Feed all who hunger, and guard refugees fleeing famine, poverty, and war. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Teach us to forgive. Remind us that you do not always accuse us. Still our tongues when we are tempted to pass judgment and argue over opinions. Make this congregation a community of mercy for one another and for all our neighbors. Continue to guide the work of our LEAD journey: for the community partners your Spirit has led us to, and for the deepening of a relationship with our neighbor. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Be present with what remains in our hearts and minds, and share what we need to hear. Listen to us as we offer these additional prayers, concerns, and thanksgivings to you — with our voices, in our hearts, and within this space... Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Whether we live or whether we die, we are yours. We thank you for those who have showed us faithfulness, for the knees that taught us how to bow to you and the tongues that taught us to praise you. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

All these things and whatever else you see that we need, we entrust to your mercy; through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

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.**

SENDING

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✚ give you peace.
Amen.

SENDING HYMN: *We Walk by Faith (ELW 635)*

We walk by faith and not by sight ~ No gracious words we hear draw near
O Christ who spoke as none e'er spoke ~ "My peace be with you here"

We may not touch His hands and side ~ Nor follow where He trod
But in His promise we rejoice ~ And cry, "My Lord and God"

Help then O Lord our unbelief ~ And may our faith abound
To call on You when You are near ~ And seek where You are found

For you O resurrected Lord ~ Are found in means divine
Beneath the water and the word~ Beneath the bread and wine

That when our life of faith is done ~ In realms of clearer light
May we behold You as You are ~ With full and endless sight

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

As you go into the rest of your day...

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

OFFERING

God has given us so much! The Offering is the opportunity for us to share some of those gifts for the work of the church and the needs of the world. Thank you for your generosity!

We encourage you to contribute your offering to help sharing in the ongoing mission and work of the church through making an online offering at www.stpaulslutherville.org. You can also mail your offerings in to the church office - we have a secured mailbox which is checked regularly.

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TODAY'S WORSHIP LEADERS

Thank you for helping to lead our worship service this morning!

Reader, First Lesson	Mary Anne Karmann
Reader, Psalm	Joan Pugh
Reader, Second Lesson	Mary Anne Karmann
Prayer Leader	Joan Pugh
Contemporary Musician, Guitar	Steve Dooley