

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

September 11, 2016

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

AS WE GATHER.....A strange and wonderful irony emerges in all three of today's Readings. The lost are found, whereas those who think they have found God, yet continue to mistreat others, are revealed to be the ones who are actually lost. There is a warning in this for us, who are tempted at times to think that we know God entirely, that we are the righteous and by our good behavior deserve God's love. Like the fat and strong sheep in Ezekiel, like Saul the smugly self-righteous persecutor, and like the grumbling scribes and Pharisees in Luke, we are tempted to mistreat those we see as lost, strayed, and weak. We are reminded that God Himself comes into the world to seek and to find the lost, the strayed, the weak, and that God rejoices with great joy when a lost sheep is found. The Church is to be a place where sinners are welcome and where lives are transformed by the relentless love of Jesus, who is always seeking the lost.

RINGING OF THE BELL

After the ringing of the bell, the congregation is invited to prepare their hearts for worship *in silence*.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING BLESSING AND FOCUS

P: In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen

P: Thus says the Lord God: I will seek the lost.

C: We thank You, O Lord!

P: Will bring back the strayed.

C: We adore You, O Lord!

P: I will bind up the injured.

C: We praise You, O Lord!

P: I will strengthen the weak.

C: We worship You, O Lord!

WE CONFESS

P: Mighty and merciful Lord, with heavy hearts we confess our sin to You.

A time of silence is observed.

P: We confess,

C: captive to sin, we have sinned against You, mighty God, in thought, word, and deed.

P: When we have treated the lost not with compassion but with condemnation,

C: We have sinned against You in thought, word and deed.

P: When our joy has been in our purity, our possessions, our reputations, and our uprightness,

C: We have sinned against You in thought, word and deed.

P: When we have neglected to care for the poor, the strayed, the weak, and have instead mocked them,

C: we have sinned against You in thought, word and deed.

P: When we have served from love that comes from a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith,

C: We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed. Bring us to repentance, Lord. Forgive us our sins, those of which we are aware and those we do unwittingly. See us, for You alone can find us and restore us.

P: Thus says the Lord God, I will rescue My sheep from all the places where they have been scattered, and I Myself will be their shepherd. Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

HYMN OF PRAISE

Shine, Jesus Shine

Lord, the Light of Your love is shining
In the midst of the darkness shining;
Jesus, Light of the World, shine upon us.
Set us free by the truth You now bring us.
Shine on me, shine on me.
*Shine, Jesus, shine,
Fill this land with the Father's glory;
Blaze, Spirit, blaze,
Set our hearts on fire.
Flow, river flow,
Flood the nations with grace and mercy.
Send forth Your Word, Lord, and let there be light.*

Lord, I come to Your awesome presence,
From the shadows into Your radiance;
By the blood I may enter Your brightness,
Search me, try me, consume all my darkness,
Shine on me, shine on me.
*Shine, Jesus, shine,
Fill this land with the Father's glory;
Blaze, Spirit, blaze,
Set our hearts on fire.
Flow, river flow,
Flood the nations with grace and mercy.
Send forth Your Word, Lord, and let there be light.*

As we gaze on Your kingly brightness,
So our faces display Your likeness;
Ever changing from glory to glory,
Mirror'd here may our lives tell Your story,
Shine on me, shine on me.
*Shine, Jesus, shine,
Fill this land with the Father's glory;
Blaze, Spirit, blaze,
Set our hearts on fire.
Flow, river flow,
Flood the nations with grace and mercy.
Send forth Your Word, Lord, and let there be light.*

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us Pray..... You O Lord, tirelessly seek the lost and the strayed.

C: We praise You for finding us, welcoming us, and redeeming us.

P: Help us never to take Your mercy for granted,

C: And guide us to join You in welcoming those who are lost or straying;

P: through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen

FIRST LESSON: Ezekiel 34:11-24 *The Lord promises personally to seek and find the lost*

“For thus says the Lord God: Behold, I, I myself will search for my sheep and will seek them out. As a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is among his sheep that have been scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and I will rescue them from all places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land. And I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the ravines, and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them with good pasture, and on the mountain heights of Israel shall be their grazing land. There they shall lie down in good grazing land, and on rich pasture they shall feed on the mountains of Israel. I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I myself will make them lie down, declares the Lord God. I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, and the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them in justice.

“As for you, my flock, thus says the Lord God: Behold, I judge between sheep and sheep, between rams and male goats. Is it not enough for you to feed on the good pasture, that you must tread down with your feet the rest of your pasture; and to drink of clear water, that you must muddy the rest of the water with your feet? And must my sheep eat what you have trodden with your feet, and drink what you have muddied with your feet?

“Therefore, thus says the Lord God to them: Behold, I, I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. Because you push with side and shoulder, and thrust at all the weak with your horns, till you have scattered them abroad, I will rescue my flock; they shall no longer be a prey. And I will judge between sheep and sheep. And I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. And I, the Lord, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them. I am the Lord; I have spoken.”

SECOND LESSON: | Timothy 1:5-17 *God was merciful to Paul*

I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service, though formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life. To the King of ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

GOSPEL: Luke 15:1-10 *The lost sheep and coins*

Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear [Jesus]. And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them."

So he told them this parable: "What man of you, have a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the once that is lost, until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.' Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

"Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and seek diligently until she finds it? And when she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.' Just so, I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

SERMON HYMN "Green Book" 448 Amazing Grace

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed!

Through many dangers, toils, and snares
I have already come;
'Tis grace has bought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me;
His Word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures.

APOSTLE’S CREED

**C: I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth.
And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
And sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
The holy Christian Church,
The communion of saints,
The forgiveness of sins,
The resurrection of the body,
And the life + everlasting. Amen**

OFFERING

COLLECTING MITES

OFFERTORY

CHOIR ANTHEM

Hear Our Prayer

By Marty Parks

(End of recording for this week)

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH AND DEDICATION OF PATIO.....

Once the choir has concluded, the congregation, as are able, are invited to the patio for the prayers and dedication.

LORD’S PRAYER

BENEDICTION

CLOSING HYMN On Our Way Rejoicing

On our way rejoicing.....Gladly let us go.
Christ our Lord has conquered; Vanquished is the foe.
Christ without, our safety; Christ within, our joy;
Who, if we be faithful.....Can our hope destroy?
On our way rejoicing; as we forward move,
Hearken to our praises, O blest God of love!

Unto God the Father.....Joyful songs we sing;
Unto God the Savior.....Thankful hearts we bring;
Unto God the Spirit.....Bow we and adore,
On our way rejoicing.....Now and evermore.
On our way rejoicing/ as we forward move,
Hearken to our praises, O blest God of love!

DISMISSAL