
SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

September 24th, 2017

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

AS WE GATHER... We gather today surrounded by God's wonderful creation! God's Word teaches that our character counts. Paul details what good character looks like when he says, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control." The freedom Jesus has given compels us to live a life filled with the fruit of the Spirit.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING SONG

"Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing"

Come, Thou Fount of ev'ry blessing, Tune my heart to sing Thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing, Call for songs of loudest praise.
While the hope of endless glory Fills my heart with joy and love,
Teach me ever to adore Thee, May I still Thy goodness prove.

Here I raise my Ebenezer, Hither by Thy help I'm come;
And I hope, by Thy good pleasure, Safely to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me when a stranger, Wand'ring from the fold of God;
He, to rescue me from danger, Interposed His precious blood.

O to grace how great a debtor, Daily I'm constrained to be;
Let that grace now like a fetter, Bind my wand'ring heart to Thee.

Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, Prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart, O take and seal it, Seal it for Thy courts above.

OPENING UP TO GOD AND ONE ANOTHER

P: As we come before the Lord, we know that we are unworthy of God's love. We have sinned against friends and families, neighbors and co-workers.

C: We have not loved God with our whole heart. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have grumbled against God and

His authorities. We have sought selfish desires instead of God's will.

P: We turn to God in repentance and implore Him for mercy.

We reflect upon our need for Jesus' forgiveness.

P: Our God is a great God and knows our needs for all areas of our life. God knows our weakness and our unbelieving hearts, yet loves us enough to die on a cross and provide forgiveness of our sin. Now the focus is not on the faith that we can muster, but on the great gifts that our Lord gives daily as we live in trust. God has given us the gift of faith, faith for the moment, faith for every trial, faith for every temptation, faith for every difficult situation. Praise God for this inexpressible gift of faith.

C: Amen.

CHORAL SONG OF PRAISE

"Our Awesome God"

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us pray. Lord God, heavenly Father, You are the Author of life. Direct us in our callings that we may serve You in humble gratitude, seeking unity and peace with all people, which is ours by the blood of Christ; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Old Testament:

Isaiah 55:6-9

"Return to the Lord, that He may have compassion.

"Seek the LORD while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God,

for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

GOSPEL:

Matthew 20:1-16

The parable of the laborers in the vineyard

"For the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And going out about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and to them he said, 'You go into the vineyard too, and whatever is right I will give you.' So they went. Going out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour, he did the same. And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing. And he said to them, 'Why do you stand here idle all day?' They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You go into the vineyard too.' And when evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last, up to the first.' And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius. Now when those hired first came, they thought they would receive more, but each of them also received a denarius. And on receiving it they grumbled at the master of the house, saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? Take what belongs to you and go. I choose to give to this last worker as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or do you begrudge my generosity?' So the last will be first, and the first last."

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Majesty, worship His majesty.
Unto Jesus be all glory power and praise.

Majesty, kingdom authority
flow from His throne
unto His own
His anthem raise.

So exalt, lift up on high the name of Jesus.
Magnify. Come glorify Christ Jesus the King.

Majesty, worship His majesty,
Jesus who died,
now glorified,
King of all kings.

SERMON

"The Third C: Character"

Prayer

WE SHARE OUR FAITH

C: I believe in God, who has created all things and continues to create new life within us.

I believe in Jesus, son of God, son of man, the Savior of the world. By His life, His death and resurrection, I can know the true depth of human possibility, and experience the true joy of an abundant life.

I believe that the Holy Spirit is present, now and always, calling us to faith, giving us gifts and empowering us for service. I believe that the community of believers called the church can experience the fullness of life through the word, the sacraments, and all that we do. Amen.

OFFERING

We offer our thanksgiving for what God has first given us—ourselves, our time, our possessions.

OFFERTORY

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

P: Let us pray for all people in their various needs, for the Church around the world, and for those near and dear to us.

P: Lord, You are our rock and our refuge. Grant Your peace to all those who live in fear, especially immigrants, refugees, and all who are oppressed. Be their light and their salvation. Lord, in Your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: Lord, look with favor upon those who are homeless, unemployed, or underemployed. Grant them patience in the midst of suffering and meaningful callings in Your perfect timing. Lord, in Your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: Lord, we know that Your ways are not our ways, but sometimes we fail to understand Your will. Strengthen the hearts of those who are coping with disappointment. Lord, in Your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: Lord, we ask Your blessing and healing upon all who are sick or recovering, (especially...). Cheer their hearts and heal their bodies according to Your perfect will. Lord, in Your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

P: Lord, each of us here today has prayer requests. During this moment of silence we pray that You would hear us and answer our prayers according to Your perfect timing (*Silence*). We ask all these things in Jesus' name.

C: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

BENEDICTION

Numbers 6:24-26

P: 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.

C: Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

"Blessed Assurance"

1. Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.

Refrain: This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Savior all the day long;
This is my story, This is my song,
Praising my Savior all the day long.

2. Perfect submission, perfect delight,
Visions of rapture now burst on my sight;
Angels descending, bring from above
Echoes of mercy, whispers of love. **Refrain**
3. Perfect submission, all is at rest,
I in my Savior am happy and blest;
Watching and waiting, looking above,
Filled with His goodness, lost in His love. **Refrain**

DISMISSAL

P: Go in Peace. Serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE