

Fifteenth Sunday After Pentecost
September 13, 2020
“God’s Boundless Mercy Is Found In Confession”



In today’s second reading Paul questions why we judge one another, since we all stand before the judgment of God. Yet we do sin against one another, and Jesus’ challenge that we forgive seventy-seven times reveals God’s boundless mercy. When we hear the words of forgiveness in worship and sign ourselves with the cross, we are renewed in baptism to be signs of reconciliation in the world.

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GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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.
Silence is kept for reflection.

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.

ENTRANCE HYMN

Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise ELW #834

- 1 Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
in light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
almighty, victorious, thy great name we praise!
- 2 Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,
nor wanting, nor wasting, thou rulest in might;
thy justice like mountains high soaring above
thy clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.
- 3 To all, life thou givest, to both great and small;
in all life thou livest, the true life of all;
we blossom and flourish like leaves on the tree,
and wither and perish, but naught changeth thee.
- 4 Thou reignest in glory; thou dwellest in light;
thine angels adore thee, all veiling their sight;
all laud we would render; oh, help us to see
'tis only the splendor of light hideth thee!

Text: Walter Chalmers Smith, 1824-1908, alt.

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.

KYRIE



- 1 Have mer - cy on us, Lord, and hear our sol - emn prayer.
- 2 Have mer - cy on us, Christ, and wash a - way our sin.
- 3 Have mer - cy on us, Lord; make sin and shame de - part.



We come to hear your liv - ing word; it saves us from de - spair.
Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may be - gin.
Re - new us with your sav - ing pow'r; cre - ate in us new hearts!

CANTICLE OF PRAISE



- 1 Glo-ry be to God in heav-en; peace, good-will to all the earth.
- 2 Glo-ry be to Christ for - ev - er, Lamb of God and Lord of love.
- 3 Ho - ly One we now ac-claim you; Lord a - lone, to you we call;



Might-y God of all cre - a - tion, Fa - ther of sur - pass - ing worth:
Son of God and gra - cious Sav - ior, you have come from heav'n a - bove;
Ho - ly One in faith we name you, God most high, yet near to all:



we ex - alt you, we a - dore you, we lift high our thanks and praise.
on the cross you died to save us; now you reign at God's right hand.
Je - sus Christ, with God the Spir - it, in the Fa - ther's splen - dor bright.



Saints and an - gels bow be - fore you; here on earth our songs we raise.
Hear our prayer, re - store, for - give us; in your prom - ise firm we stand.
For the peace that we in - her - it, glo - ry be to God on high!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

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.

BACK TO SCHOOL BLESSING



WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Exodus 14:19-31

Having decided to let the Israelites go from Egypt, Pharaoh had second thoughts and sent his army after them (14:5-8). Though the passage through the Red Sea became a sign of salvation for the people of Israel, Pharaoh's forces drowned in the waters. As a result the Israelites believed in the LORD and in the LORD's servant Moses.

¹⁹The angel of God who was going before the Israelite army moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and took its place behind them. ²⁰It came between the army of Egypt and the army of Israel. And so the cloud was there with the darkness, and it lit up the night; one did not come near the other all night.

²¹Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land; and the waters were divided. ²²The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. ²³The Egyptians pursued, and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and chariot drivers. ²⁴At the morning watch the LORD in the pillar of fire and cloud looked down upon the Egyptian army, and threw the Egyptian army into panic. ²⁵He clogged their chariot wheels so that they turned with difficulty. The Egyptians said, "Let us flee from the Israelites, for the LORD is fighting for them against Egypt."

²⁶Then the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and chariot drivers.” ²⁷So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. As the Egyptians fled before it, the LORD tossed the Egyptians into the sea. ²⁸The waters returned and covered the chariots and the chariot drivers, the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. ²⁹But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left.

³⁰Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. ³¹Israel saw the great work that the LORD did against the Egyptians. So the people feared the LORD and believed in the LORD and in his servant Moses.

**Word of God, Word of Life.
Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Exodus 15:1b-11, 20-21

^{1b}I will sing to the LORD, who has triumphed gloriously;
throwing horse and rider into the sea.

²**The LORD is my strength and my might,
and has become my salvation;**
this is my God—this God I will praise;
my father’s God—this God I will exalt.

³**The LORD is a warrior;
the LORD is his name.**

⁴The LORD hurled Pharaoh’s chariots and army into the sea;
his picked officers were sunk in the Red Sea.

⁵**The floods covered them;
they went down into the depths like a stone.**

⁶Your right hand, O LORD, glorious in power—
your right hand, O LORD, shattered the enemy.

⁷**In the greatness of your majesty you overthrew your adversaries;
you sent out your fury, it consumed them like stubble.**

⁸At the blast of your nostrils the waters piled up, the floods stood up in a heap;
the deeps congealed in the heart of the sea.

⁹The enemy said, "I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil, my desire shall have its fill of them.

I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them."

¹⁰You blew with your wind, the sea covered them;
they sank like lead in the mighty waters.

¹¹**"Who is like you, O LORD, among the gods?**

Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in splendor, doing wonders?

²⁰Then the prophet Miriam, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand;
and all the women went out after her with tambourines and with dancing.

²¹**And Miriam sang to them: "Sing to the LORD, who has triumphed gloriously;
throwing horse and rider into the sea."**

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.

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.

PLEASE RISE FOR THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al - le - lu - ia! Lord and Sav - ior: o - pen now your sav - ing word.



Let it burn like fire with - in us; speak un - til our hearts are stirred.



Al - le - lu - ia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.

GOSPEL: Matthew 18:21-35

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

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.

²¹Peter came and said to [Jesus], "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

Where Charity and Love Prevail ELW #359

- 1 Where charity and love prevail,
there God is ever found;
brought here together by Christ's love,
by love we thus are bound.
- 2 With grateful joy and holy fear,
God's charity we learn;
let us with heart and mind and soul
now love God in return.

- 3 Let us recall that in our midst
dwells Christ, God's holy Son;
as members of each body joined,
in him we are made one.

- 4 Let strife among us be unknown;
let all contentions cease.
Be God's the glory that we seek;
be his our only peace.

- 5 Let us forgive each other's faults
as we our own confess,
that we may love each other well
in Christian gentleness.

Text: Latin hymn, 9th. cent.; tr. Omer Westendorf, 1916-1997, alt.
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APOSTLE'S 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.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

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

A brief silence.

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 (*especially*).

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.



MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ

OFFERING

SLIDES OF GRANDPARENTS AND GRANDCHILDREN SHARING LOVE AND LIFE

OFFERING HYMN

Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, and fill to the
brim our cup of bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the
seeds that were sown, that we may be fed with the bread of life.

Gath-er the hopes and the dreams of all; u - nite them with the
 prayers we of - fer. Grace our ta - ble with your pres - ence,
 and give us a forc - taste of the feast to come.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray.

Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things.

You have set before us these gifts of your good creation.

**Prepare us for your heavenly banquet,
 nourish us with this rich food and drink,**

**and send us forth to set tables in the midst of a suffering world,
 through the bread of life, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.**

Amen.

DIALOGUE

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

PREFACE

It is good and joyful to sing your praise,

God of Moses and Miriam, for you are majestic in holiness,

Awesome in splendor, and glorious in power.

You rejoice in all you have made,

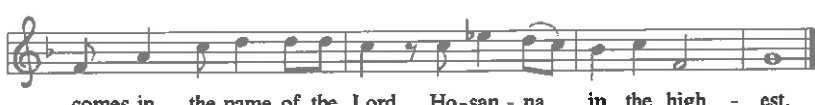
And you have created all things to ring out your joy.

When your children were shackled as Pharaoh's slaves,

You heard their cries, divided the waters of the sea,

And opened a path to lead them to freedom on dry ground.

When your people were captive to the bondage of sin,
 You sent your Son, full of your forgiving mercies,
 To release us and to send us to share with others
 The grace we have ourselves received.
 And so we give you thanks and extol your holy name,
 With angels and archangels and all the company of heaven,
 As we join the unending hymn.



GREAT THANKSGIVING

Delivering God, through your Son's dying and rising,
 You have released us from the debt of sin
 Into the company of the forgiven.
 Sanctify us, who share this meal, to be a sign of jubilee hope
 In your freeing, redeeming, life-giving promise.
 Send your Spirit upon this bread and this cup of blessing
 To be for us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ;;
 Who, at supper with his disciples, took bread, gave you thanks,
 Broke the bread, and gave it to them saying,
 "Take, eat: this is my body which is given for you;
 Do this in remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup.

Again, he gave you thanks, and gave it to this disciples, saying,

“Drink this, all of you: this is my blood of the new covenant,
Which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

Great is the mystery of faith.

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

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.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come to the banquet table
where Christ gives himself as food and drink.

COMMUNION

(Zion practices an open table. God welcomes everyone to come forward. Young children may receive bread and a blessing. If you prefer not to receive, fold your hands and receive a blessing. Grape juice and gluten free wafers are available; please ask your servers. Come to the Lord’s table and share in the feast!)

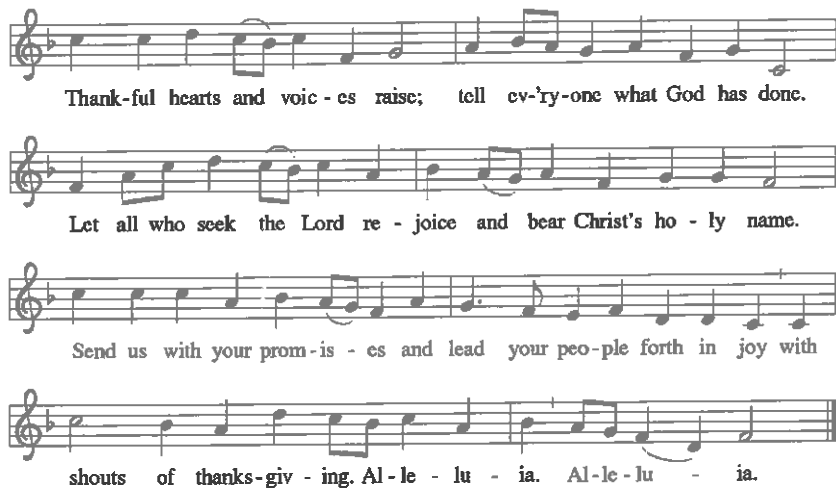
LAMB OF GOD



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace.

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

THANKFUL HEARTS AND VOICES RAISE



Thank-ful hearts and voic - es raise; tell ev-'ry-one what God has done.
Let all who seek the Lord re - joice and bear Christ's ho - ly name.
Send us with your prom-is - es and lead your peo-ple forth in joy with
shouts of thanks-giv - ing. Al - le - lu - ia. Al-le-lu - ia.

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray.

We give you thanks, gracious God,
that you have once again fed us with food beyond compare,
the body and blood of Christ.

Lead us from this place, nourished and forgiven,
into your beloved vineyard
to wipe away the tears of all who hunger and thirst,
guided by the example of the same Jesus Christ
and led by the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

Amen.



SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

Mothering God,
Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you and lead you into the way of truth and life.
Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

O Christ, Our Hope ELW #604

- 1 O Christ, our hope, our hearts' desire,
creation's mighty Lord,
redeemer of the fallen world,
by holy love outpoured, by holy love outpoured:
- 2 How vast your mercy to accept
the burden of our sin,
and bow your head in cruel death
to make us clean within, to make us clean within.

- 3 But now the bonds of death are burst,
the ransom has been paid;
you reign above at God's right hand.
in robes of light arrayed, in robes of light arrayed.
- 4 Oh, let your mighty love prevail
to purge us of our pride,
that we may stand before your throne
by mercy purified, by mercy purified.
- 5 All praise to you, ascended Lord;
all glory ever be
to Father, Son, and Spirit blest
through all eternity, through all eternity!

Text: Latin hymn, c. 8th cent.; tr. John Chandler, 1806-1876, adapt.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Remember the poor.
Thanks be to God.



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Weekly Announcements

Please keep these family, friends and members in your prayers: Christy Hebeisen, Lowell Tritabaugh, Ginny Parrow, Jenna Dobner, Glen Lueders. Gale Ribar, Becky Schlueter, Vernon Pautsch, John Sylwester, Arlene Faust, Janet Deno, Dilshad Perani, Kevin Biermann

Please keep in your prayers: Melissa Allen who has recently been deployed to Iraq.

Zion has changed our email account. Our new email is

zion.elca.814@gmail.com

Zion Lutheran Church services can be viewed on:

Facebook at
Zion Lutheran Church

YouTube at
www.youtube.com
Search: Zion ELCA Arlington MN

www.zionarlington.org

Bible Study via ZOOM will start a new study on the Psalms beginning on Thursday, September 17 at 10:00am. Interested? Speak with Pastor.

Thank-you for remembering your Offerings!

It seems that multiple ways of giving are appreciated by everyone! They will continue! You may contribute to your church by bank transfer, PayPal/Credit Card via Website, US Postal service or by your envelope drop off on Saturdays 10-12 am or Wednesdays 1-2:30 pm, or Sunday mornings.

Exploring Religious Questions—Fall 2020

Right, Left, and Sometimes Together: Varieties of Religious Engagement in American Political Life (1960-2020)

This mini-course will be held via ZOOM Monday nights, Oct. 12, 19, 26 and Nov. 2, 2020. Political commentators today often refer to U.S. politics as polarized, and we commonly see those on both the Left and the Right cheering their own political team and reflexively distrusting the other.

In this course, we will discuss the role of religion in politics since the 1960s and consider whether polarization reflects the whole story of American political life today. As we explore the engagement of religious individuals and organizations in a variety of issues, from Civil Rights and abortion to state and local policies, we will see that the story of Left and Right in American politics is one of both growing apart and, occasionally and sometimes surprisingly, coming together. The course will be taught on four consecutive Monday evenings.

WHEN: Monday, October 12, 19, 26 and Nov. 2 7:00-9:00 p.m.

WHERE: Online - Zoom

WHO: Anyone who wants to explore this topic. All are welcome!

COST: \$35/person (registration deadline: October 8th)

TO REGISTER: Please complete the form below and return with payment to: Gustavus Adolphus College, Church Relations, 800 West College Ave., St. Peter, MN 56082

For more information contact Church Relations at Gustavus at 507- 933-7001 or church-relations@gustavus.edu.

INFORMATION IS LOCATED ON THE BULLETIN BOARD



Zion Lutheran Church ELCA

This Week at Zion:

Sunday, September 13	9:00a 1-3p	Worship w/Holy Communion—Live-stream, in-person Back to School Blessing Templo Maranatha
Thursday, September 17	10:00a 7:00p	ZOOM Bible Study - Psalms Confirmation Parents Meeting
Sunday, September 20	9:00a 10:00a 1-3p	Contemporary Worship —Live-stream, in-person Sunday School Templo Maranatha
Monday through Friday	10:00a	Daily Devotionals on Facebook
Saturday	10-12	Pickup of Holy Communion and bulletins

September 17 Confirmation meeting is for the confirmands and parents of those being confirmed on September 27. NOT the new-upcoming confirmation class.

September 20 Contemporary Worship at 9am will be outdoors weather permitting. A new song or two will be added.

*"Teach me, O LORD ... give me understanding ..."
(Psalm 119:33-34).*

*With a new school year underway, may we grow not only in
knowledge and skills but in faith toward God and love for others.*