

L. Y. N.

Love Your Neighbor

Wear a mask, Wash your hands, Respect space!

Divine Worship Pentecost XVI 20 September 2020 St. Matthew Trinity Parish

Introduction

Matthew narrates one of Jesus' controversial parables in which Jesus says that the reign of God is like that of a landowner who pays his workers the same wage no matter what time of day they began to work. When God changes God's mind about punishing Nineveh for their evil ways, Jonah is angry. Yet God is gracious and merciful, abounding in steadfast love. In baptism we receive the grace of God that is freely given to all. As Martin Luther wrote, in the presence of God's mercy we are all beggars.



Welcome

Prelude Trumpet Tune (Homage to the 18th Century) - David N. Johnson

Thanksgiving for the Word

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,
whose steadfast love is everlasting,
whose faithfulness endures from generation to generation.
Amen.

Let us pray.

We thank you, O God, for your life-giving Word,
for calling creation into being,
declaring forgiveness from the cross,
and delivering the spirit of rebirth.

We praise you, O God, for your Word:
we praise you, O God, for your Word.

Your word is a lamp lighting our path,
a mirror reflecting our selves,
a shield providing us refuge,
a fire burning for justice and truth.
Your word is sweeter than honey:
it nourishes our bodies like milk,
it sustains your people like bread.
We receive your promises, more treasured than gold.
We bless you, O God, for your Word:
we bless you, O God, for your Word.

Open our ears to your prophets, apostles, and saints,
and to all the cries of the needy.
Breathe into your church the mighty Spirit of Christ,
that heeding your voice of beauty and power
we are strengthened to serve wherever we are called.

To you, Father, Son, and Spirit – the Source, Word, and Breath —
we offer our thanks for your life-giving Word:
we offer our thanks for your life-giving Word.

Apostolic Greeting *II Corinthians*

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

Almighty and eternal God, you show perpetual lovingkindness to us your
servants. Because we cannot rely on our own abilities, grant us your
merciful judgment, and train us to embody the generosity of your Son, Jesus
Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

First Reading: Jonah 3:10--4:11

After Jonah's short sermon in 3:4, the Ninevites all repented and God decided to spare the city. Jonah objected to this and became even more angry when God ordered a worm to destroy a plant that was providing shade. The book ends with a question that challenges any who are not ready to forgive: You, Jonah, are all worked up about a bush, but shouldn't I be concerned about a hundred and twenty thousand Ninevites?



*Jonah being thrown into the Sea.
Catacomb of Saint Peter and Saint Marcellino, Rome, Italy*

When God saw what [the people of Ninevah] did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.

^{4:1}But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. ²He prayed to the Lord and said, "O Lord! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing. ³And now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live." ⁴And the Lord said, "Is it right for you to be angry?" ⁵Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city, and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city.

⁶The Lord God appointed a bush, and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort; so Jonah was very happy about the bush. ⁷But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. ⁸When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, "It is better for me to die than to live."

⁹But God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?" And he said, "Yes, angry enough to die." ¹⁰Then the Lord said, "You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. ¹¹And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also many animals?"

Psalm: Psalm 145:1-8

The Lord is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. (Ps. 145:8)

- ¹I will exalt you, my | God and king,
and bless your name forev- | er and ever.
- ²**Every day | will I bless you
and praise your name forev- | er and ever.**
- ³Great is the Lord and greatly | to be praised!
There is no end | to your greatness.
- ⁴**One generation shall praise your works | to another
and shall de- | clare your power. R**
- ⁵I will speak of the glorious splendor | of your majesty
and all your | marvelous works.
- ⁶**They shall tell of the might of your | wondrous acts,
and I will re- | count your greatness.**
- ⁷They shall publish the remembrance of | your great goodness;
they shall sing joyfully | of your righteousness.
- ⁸**The Lord is gracious and full | of compassion,
slow to anger and abounding in | steadfast love. R**

Second Reading: Philippians 1:21-30

Paul writes to the Philippians from prison. Though he is uncertain about the outcome of his imprisonment, he is committed to the ministry of the gospel and calls on the Philippians to live lives that reflect and enhance the gospel mission.

For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. ²²If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which I prefer. ²³I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; ²⁴but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. ²⁵Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, ²⁶so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again.

²⁷Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, ²⁸and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. ²⁹For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well—
³⁰since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia *Open out hearts, O Lord, to give heed to what is said by your Son.* Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

Gospel: Matthew 20:1-16

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹"The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ²After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. ³When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; ⁴and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. ⁵When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. ⁶And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' ⁷They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' ⁸When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' ⁹When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. ¹⁰Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. ¹¹And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ¹²saying, '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.' ¹³But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? ¹⁴Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. ¹⁵Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?' ¹⁶So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

Meditation – Pastor LeCroy

Reflection

The old story goes that Jonah does not want Israel's ancient enemies forgiven for he does not think they deserve it. Then, in Matthew's parable, the first workers, expecting that they themselves should get more, do not think the latecomers deserve full pay. Do we draw lines about who is deserving and who not? The gospel is always teaching us that if we draw a line to exclude someone, Jesus Christ is always on the other side of the line: in the cross he is with the unsalaried, the suffering poor, the sinners, the enemies, even the threatened animals. And he is risen to give away mercy to all, to give enough to live this day. The justice and "fairness" of God is mercy. And none of us is deserving. We, too, are latecomers — beggars for life — and God's gift is for us all, without distinction. Such mercy gives us an utterly new way to see the world.

Hymn ELW 587

There's a Wideness in God's Mercy



- 1 There's a wide-ness
- 2 There is wel-come
- 3 For the love of
- 4 'Tis not all we



in God's mer - cy, like the wide - ness of the sea;
for the sin - ner, and a prom - ised grace made good;
God is broad - er than the mea - sures of our mind;
owe to Je - sus; it is some - thing more than all:



there's a kind - ness in God's jus - tice which is more than
there is mer - cy with the Sav - ior; there is heal - ing
and the heart of the E - ter - nal is most won - der -
great - er good be - cause of e - vil, larg - er mer - cy



lib - er - ty. There is no place where earth's sor - rows
in his blood. There is grace e - nough for thou - sands
ful - ly kind. But we make this love too nar - row
through the fall. Make our love, O God, more faith - ful;



are more felt than up in heav'n. There is no place
of new worlds as great as this; there is room for
by false lim - its of our own; and we mag - ni -
let us take you at your word, and our lives will



where earth's fail - ings have such kind - ly judg - ment giv'n.
fresh cre - a - tions in that up - per home of bliss.
fy its strict - ness with a zeal God will not own.
be thanks-giv - ing for the good - ness of the Lord.

Text: Frederick W. Faber, 1814–1863, alt.

Music: ST. HELENA, Calvin Hampton, 1938–1984

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Prayers

Remember in your prayers and with acts of kindness:

- Those who continue to mourn from the events of **9/11**
- The family of **Khalila Pitman** (a member of Pastor's former parish who was murdered this week)
- The family and friends of **Johnny Cortes** (LTM guest)
- **Bill Goffi** (Shelter Church pianist)
- **Dena Calabrese** (friend of Irene Murray)
- **Carol and Donna** (friends of Leslie Neve)
- **Zoia "Charlie" Foster** (Pastor's niece)
- The Family of **Sean Gustwiller** (friends of Courtney Kochuba)
- **Pastor Tom and Janice Kildea, and their children James and Jenny**, at the death by suicide of their oldest son and brother, **Amani**, and the congregation of **Redeemer, Succasunna**.
- **John Weakland** (Brian Weakland's Father)
- **Dida Hagen** (friend of MIndy R recently diagnosed with lung cancer).
- **Joanne Kraye**, (Joel's cousin).
- **Those in our community lost to Covid19: Gilberto and Janet Diaz-Granados** (friends of pastor), **Francis Ng** (friend of Dan Stoll) **Charles Powers** (friend of the Meusel family) **Rosa Reyes** (funeral by our parish), **Richard Altomare** (friend of our neighborhood), **Barbara Wolfshorndl** (funeral by our parish), **Dawn Ennis** (sister-in-law of Pamella Pater-Ennis) **Arthur Jusu-Davies** (member) and **Florence Dombrowsky** (funeral by our parish).

Drawn together in the compassion of God, we pray for the church, the world, and all those in need, responding to each petition with the words "graciously hear our prayer."

O God, you make the last first, and the first last. Give resources and courage to the churches around the globe that have few resources. When ministry in this time is so difficult, inspire bishops, pastors, deacons, and congregational leaders in their service.

A brief silence.

O God, you are full of compassion:
graciously hear our prayer.

Continue your care for your whole creation: sun and wind, bushes and worms, cities and farms, and all your many animals. Make us into extensions of your care. Preserve the food sources of the world's endangered wildlife.

O God, you are full of compassion:
graciously hear our prayer.

To places of conflict and violence, bring peace, especially to the cities of our nation. Bless the work of negotiators, peacekeepers, and development workers. Preserve protesters, and guide police. Enlighten our nation, the nations we call friends, and the nations that are deemed our enemies. Keep our election season from dishonesty. Provide decency in our discourse over the work and replacement of Justice Ginsberg.

O God, you are full of compassion:
graciously hear our prayer.

Give your blessing to the Jewish people at this time of their new year. Bring an end to anti-Semitism around the globe and strengthen peace efforts in the Middle East.

O God, you are full of compassion:
graciously hear our prayer.

To all who are suffering, show your mercy. We pray for firefighters, for communities devastated by fire, for all who suffer racial injustice, for migrants who seek safety, for all who are imprisoned, for victims of crime, for the unemployed, for students and faculty during the pandemic, for medical workers, for all who are hungry: O God, the list of the needy is so long. . .

O God, you are full of compassion:
graciously hear our prayer.

Give health and wholeness to all who are sick, to all who are suffering from the coronavirus, and to those we name before you here:

O God, you are full of compassion:
graciously hear our prayer.

You show mercy beyond our expectations, far beyond our deserving. Hear now our personal prayers.

A longer period of silence.

O God, you are full of compassion:
graciously hear our prayer.

We praise you for all the saints, especially this week for the apostle Matthew and for the gift of his gospel that speaks to us of your goodness. Give us grace to live for Christ, until we join with all the faithful in your eternal life.

O God, you are full of compassion:
graciously hear our prayer.

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

Amen.

**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.**

Or

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever.
Amen.**

Announcements

Check out our newsletter each week for announcements about:

- **Bible Study**
- **In-Person Worship and Annual Meeting**
- **SMT Center Opening**
- **LTM and the StreEatery**
- **Contributions to honor People and Events**
- **Offering Now**
- **Commemorations**

Blessing

Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers,
nor things present, nor things to come,
nor powers, nor height, nor depth,
nor anything else in all creation,
will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.
God, the creator, ✝ Jesus, the Christ,
and the Holy Spirit, the comforter,
bless you and keep you in eternal love. **Amen.**

Dismissal

Go in peace. Love your neighbor as yourself.
Thanks be to God.

Serving Today

The Rev. Gary C. LeCroy, Pastor

Mr. Richard Brode, Orgelmeister

Mr. Mark Singleton, Cantor

Ms. Rebeka Schleifer, Cantor

Ms. Courtney Kochuba, Lector

Readings for the Week:

- **Monday** (Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist) Matthew 9:9-13.
- **Tuesday** Romans 16:17-20.
- **Wednesday** Matthew 18:1-5.
- **Thursday** Psalm 25:1-9.
- **Friday** Ezekiel 18:5-18.
- **Saturday** Ezekiel 18:19-24.
- **Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost** Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32; Psalm 25:1-9; Philipians 2:1-13; Matthew 21:23-32.

Nelson Wesley Trout, bishop, died 1996 (TFF)
Sunday, September 20, 2020

A native of Ohio, Trout served parishes in several parts of the United States before being elected bishop of the South Pacific District of the American Lutheran Church, the first African American Lutheran to serve in such a capacity.

Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist
Monday, September 21, 2020

Matthew (or Levi) was a tax collector in Capernaum for the Roman government. Tax collectors were frequently despised for dishonesty and for assisting the occupiers. Jesus nevertheless showed love for them, and chose Matthew to be a disciple.

Daily Prayer Resources are available, including simple forms of Morning, Evening, and Night Prayer; Responsive Prayer; and prayers for mealtimes and other occasions.

Due to copyright restrictions, we are only able to provide downloadable hymns that are in the public domain. Other suggestions provided above may be found in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*. To purchase a copy of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* for the home, visit the [Augsburg Fortress website](#) or call 1-800-328-4648.

Reflection text: Gordon Lathrop. Intercessory Prayer: Gail Ramshaw

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