

# L. Y. N.

## Love Your Neighbor

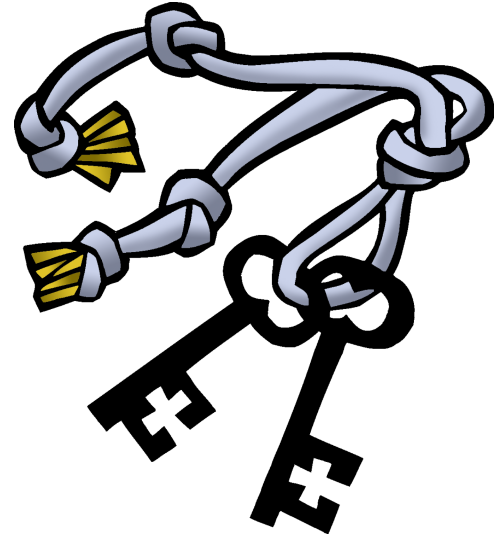
*Wear a mask, Wash your hands, Respect space!*

## Divine Worship

## Pentecost XII

SMT Parish

August 23, 2020



### Introduction

In Isaiah the people are advised to look to their spiritual ancestors as the rock from which they were hewn. Jesus declares that the church will be built on the rock of Peter's bold confession of faith. God's word of reconciliation and God's mercy are keys to the church's mission. Paul urges us to not be conformed to this world but to offer our bodies as a living sacrifice, using our individual gifts to build up the body of Christ. From the table we go forth to offer our spiritual worship through word and deed.

### Confession and Forgiveness

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

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

**Amen.**

Trusting in the mercy of God, let us confess our sin.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Reconciling God,

**we confess that we do not trust your abundance,  
and we deny your presence in our lives.**

**We place our hope in ourselves  
and rely on our own efforts.  
We fail to believe that you provide enough for all.  
We abuse your good creation for our own benefit.  
We fear difference and do not welcome others  
as you have welcomed us.  
We sin in thought, word, and deed.  
By your grace, forgive us;  
through your love, renew us;  
and in your Spirit, lead us;  
so that we may live and serve you in newness of life. Amen.**

Beloved of God,  
by the radical abundance of divine mercy  
we have peace with God through ✝ Christ Jesus,  
through whom we have obtained grace upon grace.  
Our sins are forgiven.  
Let us live now in hope.  
For hope does not disappoint,  
because God's love has been poured into our hearts  
through the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

### **Prayer of the Day**

O God, with all your faithful followers of every age, we praise you, the rock of our life. Be our strong foundation and form us into the body of your Son, that we may gladly minister to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

### **First Reading: Isaiah 51:1-6**

*Just as God had called Abraham and Sarah and given them many descendants, so now God offers comfort to Zion. God's deliverance will come soon and will never end.*

<sup>1</sup>Listen to me, you that pursue righteousness,  
you that seek the Lord.

Look to the rock from which you were hewn,  
and to the quarry from which you were dug.

<sup>2</sup>Look to Abraham your father  
and to Sarah who bore you;  
for he was but one when I called him,  
but I blessed him and made him many.

<sup>3</sup>For the Lord will comfort Zion;  
he will comfort all her waste places,

and will make her wilderness like Eden,  
her desert like the garden of the Lord;  
joy and gladness will be found in her,  
thanksgiving and the voice of song.

<sup>4</sup>Listen to me, my people,  
and give heed to me, my nation;  
for a teaching will go out from me,  
and my justice for a light to the peoples.

<sup>5</sup>I will bring near my deliverance swiftly,  
my salvation has gone out  
and my arms will rule the peoples;  
the coastlands wait for me,  
and for my arm they hope.

<sup>6</sup>Lift up your eyes to the heavens,  
and look at the earth beneath;  
for the heavens will vanish like smoke,  
the earth will wear out like a garment,  
and those who live on it will die like gnats;  
but my salvation will be forever,  
and my deliverance will never be ended.

### **Psalm: Psalm 138**

***O Lord, your steadfast love endures forever. (Ps. 138:8)***

<sup>1</sup>I will give thanks to you, O Lord, with | my whole heart;  
before the gods I will | sing your praise.

**<sup>2</sup>I will bow down toward your holy temple and praise your name,  
because of your steadfast | love and faithfulness;  
for you have glorified your name and your word a- | bove all  
things.**

<sup>3</sup>When I called, you | answered me;  
you increased my | strength within me.

**<sup>4</sup>All the rulers of the earth will praise | you, O Lord,  
when they have heard the words | of your mouth. R**

<sup>5</sup>They will sing of the ways | of the Lord,  
that great is the glory | of the Lord.

**<sup>6</sup>The Lord is high, yet cares | for the lowly,  
perceiving the haughty | from afar.**

<sup>7</sup>Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you | keep me safe;  
you stretch forth your hand against the fury of my enemies; your  
right | hand shall save me.

**<sup>8</sup>You will make good your pur- | pose for me;  
O Lord, your steadfast love endures forever; do not abandon the  
works | of your hands. R**

## **Second Reading: Romans 12:1-8**

*In response to God's merciful activity, we are to worship by living holistic, God-pleasing lives. Our values and viewpoints are not molded by the time in which we live but are transformed by the Spirit's renewing work. God's grace empowers different forms of service among Christians, but all forms of ministry function to build up the body of Christ.*

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. <sup>2</sup>Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

<sup>3</sup>For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. <sup>4</sup>For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, <sup>5</sup>so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. <sup>6</sup>We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; <sup>7</sup>ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; <sup>8</sup>the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

## **Gospel Acclamation**

### **Gospel: Matthew 16:13-20**

*At a climactic point in Jesus' ministry, God reveals to Peter that Jesus is "the Messiah, the Son of the living God," and Jesus responds with the promise of a church that will overcome the very gates of Hades.*

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" <sup>14</sup>And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." <sup>15</sup>He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" <sup>16</sup>Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." <sup>17</sup>And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. <sup>18</sup>And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. <sup>19</sup>I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." <sup>20</sup>Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

## **Meditation**

If we think with sober judgment, as Paul counsels, we are none of us reliable as a rock. But then neither was Abraham, “the rock from which” the people of God “were hewn.” Abraham believed God, but according to the stories, he also repeatedly lied. And to call Peter “the Rock” — Peter, who doubted and then denied Jesus — seems like a joke. But in Matthew, Jesus speaks blessing, mercy, and forgiveness to Peter. He speaks these also to us. Following Jesus, in our conversations with and prayers for each other, we can be using the very keys that Peter is given, forgiving and loosing one another with the actual mercy of God, the mercy that will yet make of the afflicted earth a garden of thanksgiving. The forgiving mercy of God in the crucified Christ is the rock on which the church is built, even when all else falls and dies, the ground from which we turn in generosity to our needy neighbors, worshipping God by how we use our bodily lives.

## **Hymn**

## Built on a Rock



1 Built on a rock the church shall stand, e - ven when stee - ples are  
 2 Sure - ly, in tem - ples made with hands God the Most High is not  
 3 Christ builds a house of liv - ing stones: we are his own hab - i -  
 4 Yet in this house, an earth - ly frame, Je - sus the chil - dren is  
 5 Through all the pass - ing years, O Lord, grant that, when church bells are



fall - ing; crum - bled have spires in ev - 'ry land, bells still are  
 dwell - ing— high in the heav'ns his tem - ple stands, all earth - ly  
 ta - tion; he fills our hearts, his hum - ble thrones, grant - ing us  
 bless - ing; hith - er we come to praise his name, faith in our  
 ring - ing, man - y may come to hear your Word, who here this



chim - ing and call - ing— call - ing the young and old to rest, call - ing the  
 tem - ples ex - cel - ling. Yet God who dwells in heav'n a - bove deigns to a -  
 life and sal - va - tion. Where two or three will seek his face, he in their  
 Sav - ior con - fess - ing. Je - sus to us his Spir - it sent, mak - ing with  
 prom - ise is bring - ing: "I know my own, my own know me; you, not the



souls of those dis - tressed, long - ing for life ev - er - last - ing.  
 bide with us in love, mak - ing our bod - ies his tem - ple.  
 midst will show his grace, bless - ings up - on them be - stow - ing.  
 us his cov - e - nant, grant - ing his chil - dren the king - dom.  
 world, my face shall see; my peace I leave with you. A - men."

Text: Nikolai F. S. Grundtvig, 1783–1872; tr. Carl Doving, 1867–1937, adapt.  
 Music: KIRKEN DEN ER ET GAMMEL HUS, Ludvig M. Lindeman, 1812–1887  
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## Prayers

### Prayers of Intercession

**Remember in your prayers and with acts of kindness:**

- **The family and friends of Johnny** (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)
- We give thanks for the life of **Arthur Jusu-Davies**, a member of St Matthew Trinity who passed away during the last week of May.
- **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 Krayer**, (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 Pamela Pater-Ennis) and **Florence Dombrowsky** (funeral by our parish).

Held together in one body by the Spirit of Christ, let us pray for the church and the world, responding to each petition with words from today’s psalm, “your steadfast love endures forever.”

*A brief silence.*

Bless the church, that despite the hardships experienced during this pandemic, Christians around the globe will stand firm on the rock, who is Christ. Support pastors, deacons, and congregational committees during this difficult time. Give wisdom to churches that are considering when and how to resume their communal worship schedule. Unfailing God,

hear our prayer:

**your steadfast love endures forever.**

Bless the earth, that it be saved from ecological harm. Restore all lands and seas to the beauty and vigor that you intend. Protect animals whose habitat is endangered. Train us to be gardeners of your creation. We pray for those suffering the effects of destructive summer storms and scorching heat. Creator God, hear our prayer:

**your steadfast love endures forever.**

Bless the leaders of nations, that they govern their people with integrity and attend to the needs of the poor. Guard the United States from violence. Give clear purpose to protestors and to police. Inspire our political parties to conduct the election season with honesty and respect for all. God of justice, hear our prayer:

**your steadfast love endures forever.**

Bless our various means of communication, our phones, the internet, our postal service, and delivery businesses, that our communities be sustained for fruitful life together.

Merciful God, hear our prayer:

**your steadfast love endures forever.**

Bless students, that whether in class or at home they be kept safe and able to learn. Uphold faculty and families and protect all who will be affected by the opening of schools. Form college students to conduct themselves with maturity. Benevolent God, hear our prayer:

**your steadfast love endures forever.**

Bless all who are in need; all who have tested positive for the virus; the sick and the dying. We pray for the unemployed; for medical workers; for those seeking a vaccine; for those who are overwhelmed with anxiety about the future. We pray for those we name here:

Compassionate God, hear our prayer:

**your steadfast love endures forever.**

We praise you for the lives of all your faithful people. We mourn the death of those we have loved. Bring us at the end, we pray, into the joy and gladness of life together in you. Eternal God, hear our prayer:

**your steadfast love endures forever.**

Finally, we pray also for ourselves, that with Christ as our rock, we can stand firm.

*A period of silence.*

Merciful God, hear our prayer:

**your steadfast love endures forever.**

In the certain hope that nothing can separate us from your love, we offer these prayers to you; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

*Then conclude with these prayers:*



Let us pray.

*A brief silence is kept before the prayer.*

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.**

Amen. Amen.

**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.

## 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 in Worship Today

**The Rev. Gary C. LeCroy, D. Min.**  
**Mr. Richard Brode, Orgelmeister**  
**Ms. Rebeka Scleifer, cantor**

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## [SMT Weekly Email Newsletter](#)

### Readings for the Week:



**Monday** (Bartholomew, Apostle) John 1:43-51.



**Tuesday** Romans 11:33-36.



**Wednesday** Isaiah 28:14-22.



**Thursday** Psalm 26:1-8.



**Friday** (commemoration of Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, died 430; Moses the Black, monk, martyr, died around 400) 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12.



**Saturday** Jeremiah 15:10-14.



**Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost** Jeremiah 15:15-21; Psalm 26:1-8;  
Romans 12:9-21; Matthew 16:21-28.

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

Reflection text: Gordon Lathrop. Intercessory Prayer: Gail Ramshaw

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**Bil Goffi**