

L. Y. N.

Love Your Neighbor

Wear a mask, Wash your hands, Respect space!

Divine Worship

Pentecost XIV

SMT Parish

6 September, 2020



Introduction

Conflict is a part of relationships and life in community. Jesus' words in today's gospel are often used in situations having to do with church discipline. The prophet Ezekiel tells of warning the wicked to turn from their ways, and Paul reminds us that love is the fulfilling of the law. We gather in the name of Christ, assured that he is present among us with gifts of peace and reconciliation.

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Welcome

Prelude

Thanksgiving for the Word

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the pastor begins.

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

Amen.

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.

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

O Lord God, enliven and preserve your church with your perpetual mercy.
Without your help, we mortals will fail; remove far from us everything that is
harmful, and lead us toward all that gives life and salvation, through Jesus
Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

First Reading: Ezekiel 33:7-11

God appointed Ezekiel as a sentinel for the house of Israel. Ezekiel must faithfully convey God's warnings to the people. Remarkably, God—who is about to attack Jerusalem—gives a warning with the hope that repentance will make the attack unnecessary.

So you, mortal, I have made a sentinel for the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. ⁸If I say to the wicked, "O wicked ones, you shall surely die," and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but their blood I will require at your hand. ⁹But if you warn the wicked to turn from their ways, and they do not turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but you will have saved your life.

¹⁰Now you, mortal, say to the house of Israel, Thus you have said: "Our transgressions and our sins weigh upon us, and we waste away because of them; how then can we live?" ¹¹Say to them, As I live, says the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from their ways and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel?

Ezekiel

*Duccio di Buoninsegna
1308-1311
National Gal. of Art*



Psalm: Psalm 119:33-40

I desire the path of your commandments. (Ps. 119:35)

³³Teach me, O Lord, the way | of your statutes,
and I shall keep it | to the end.

³⁴**Give me understanding, and I shall | keep your teaching;
I shall keep it with | all my heart.**

³⁵Lead me in the path of | your commandments,
for that is | my desire.

³⁶**Incline my heart to | your decrees
and not to | unjust gain. R**

³⁷Turn my eyes from be- | holding falsehood;
give me life | in your way.

³⁸**Fulfill your promise | to your servant,
which is for | those who fear you.**

³⁹Turn away the reproach | that I dread,
because your judg- | ments are good.

⁴⁰**Behold, I long for | your commandments;
by your righteousness en- | liven me. R**

Second Reading: Romans 13:8-14

The obligation of Christians is to love one another and so fulfill the heart and goal of the law. Clothes make the person as we "put on the Lord Jesus Christ" and live today in light of the future God has in store for us.

Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. ⁹The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet"; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, "Love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁰Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.

¹¹Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; ¹²the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; ¹³let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. ¹⁴Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia. In Christ God was reconciling the world | to himself,* entrusting the message of reconcilia- | tion to us. *Alleluia.* (2 Cor. 5:19)

Gospel: Matthew 18:15-20

Jesus offers practical advice to his disciples on how individuals—and the church as a whole—should go about restoring relationships when one member has sinned against another.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. ¹⁶But if you are not

listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. ¹⁷If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. ¹⁸Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. ¹⁹Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. ²⁰For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.”

Meditation -*Pastor LeCroy*

Reflection

Let Ezekiel the prophet speak to us today, in the name of God. If we do not turn from our own sins toward the mercy of God, we will waste away and die. And we are such sinners. But in Matthew, Jesus gives us a way of mutual forgiveness. The “keys” that he gave to Peter two Sundays ago, he gives now to the whole church. When someone has offended us, we should not respond with gossip nor with announcing a grievance on social media, but with direct contact and mutual reconciliation. And in the midst of our common life, especially as we are gathered in prayer but even when we are isolated from each other, the risen Christ dwells, as he promised. He is the source of all forgiveness, the grounds of reconciliation. He dawns for us like the day. Baptized in his Spirit, we may put on Christ like clothing, which is: we may put on love for our neighbor.

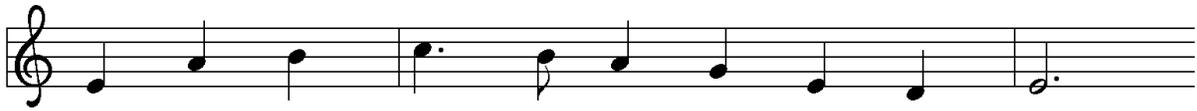
Hymn

A hymn most appropriate for this day is the poignant “In all our grief” (ELW 615). The “grief” of the opening line comes from the pain we put each other through, the angry word, the will and wish to hurt. Always we plead for God’s mercy. This hymn was written in 1985 by Sylvia Dunstan, an ordained minister in the United Church of Canada. She died of cancer before she was forty, and Evangelical Lutheran Worship includes four of her hymns.

In All Our Grief



1 In all our grief and fear we turn to you.
2 Help us to put a - side the an - gry word,
3 You did not e - ven spare your on - ly Son.
4 God, when we suf - fer all that we can bear,



O God, you know all that we think or do,
the clenched fist, the wish and will to hurt.
He lived our griefs and bore all e - vil done,
then let us know that you in truth are near



you know the pain we put each oth - er through.
Teach us the way in which love best is served.
but through his cross, re - demp - tion has been won.
and will not leave us lost in all our fear.

Refrain



Lord, have mer - cy, Christ, have mer - cy, Lord, grant us peace.

Text: Sylvia G. Dunstan, 1955–1993

Music: FREDERICKTOWN, Charles R. Anders, b. 1929

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Prayers of Intercession

Remember in your prayers and with acts of kindness:

- Those who continue to mourn from the events of **9/11**
- 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 Krayner**, (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 by the compassion of God, we pray for the church, the world, and all those in need, responding to each petition with the words “Hear us and help us.”

Unite your church, O God. Give to all the baptized the gifts of repentance and reconciliation. Strengthen ecumenical partnerships and interracial cooperation among the churches. Guide the work of the Lutheran World Federation and the World Council of Churches. O God, Leader of the church, in your mercy,
hear us and help us.

Protect your creation, O God. Teach us ways to live that do not harm what you have entrusted to our care. Give to the animals the habitat they need for life. Renew and enliven places suffering from drought, flood, storms, or pollution. O God, Creator of the earth, in your mercy,
hear us and help us.

Bless the nations, O God. Frustrate the designs of dictators. Give to the military a clear and moral purpose. Guide legislators, civil servants, judges, and police toward the well-being of all. Infuse the coming election season with honesty and integrity. O God, Governor of the world, in your mercy,
hear us and help us.

Sustain us in our work, O God, and give employment to those who need it. Shape societies to ensure fair treatment for all who labor. Help us to love our neighbors in and through our

work. O God, Guardian of all peoples, in your mercy,
hear us and help us.

Guide our civil discourse, O God. Alert us to social evils and show our nation how to end the patterns of racial injustice. Accompany all are endeavoring to bring about a renewed society. Curb the violence in our cities. O God, Haven of righteousness, in your mercy,
hear us and help us.

Tend to all in need, O God. Assist all friends and family members who are seeking restored relationships. Give community to the lonely and welcome to the outcast. Shelter all who are vulnerable in body, mind, or spirit, especially those we name here before you. O God, Physician of the sick, in your mercy,
hear us and help us.

Receive once again, O God, our plea for the end of the coronavirus. Comfort those afflicted with COVID-19 and uphold our medical workers. Give youth a sense of responsibility for others and provide the world a vaccine. O God, Healer in times of plague, in your mercy,
hear us and help us.

Hear each one of us, O God, as we pray now for ourselves.

A longer period of silence.

O God, Lover of us all, in your mercy,
hear us and help us.

We remember with thanksgiving those who have died in faith. As you equipped them, equip us with your protection and power, until with them we see your salvation. O God, Eternal One, in your mercy,
hear us and help us.

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
- Outdoor in-Person Worship
- SMT Center opening
- LTM and the StreEatery
- Contributions to honor People and Events
- Offering Now
- Annual Meeting – September 27th

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. Jennifer Meusel, Lector

Readings and Commemorations for the Week:

- **Monday** Psalm 116:65-72.
- **Tuesday** Romans 13:1-7.
- **Wednesday** Commemoration of Peter Claver, priest, missionary to Colombia, died 1654. **Peter Claver, priest, missionary to Colombia, died 1654.** Born into Spanish nobility, Claver became a Jesuit missionary, and served in present-day Colombia. His ministry was focused on the slaves that arrived there. He gave them food and medicine, learned their dialects, and taught them Christianity. Matthew 21:18-22.
- **Thursday** Psalm 103:[1-7] 8-13.
- **Friday** Genesis 41:53—42:17.
- **Saturday** Matthew 6:7-15.
- **Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost** (commemoration of John Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople, died 407) Genesis 50:15-21; Psalm 103:[1-7] 8-13; Romans 14:1-12; Matthew 18:21-35.

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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