

Worship
The Eighth Sunday after Pentecost
July 26, 2020

Before you begin this service, you may wish to hear the Hymn: "Amazing Grace." Here is the link to this Hymn:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cIYvT745alg>

Announcement

It was not possible to tape the worship for Sunday, July 26th. Therefore I am sharing with you only the printed service which I have done previously. We are scheduled to film the worship for the first Sunday in August. I wish to thank Pastor James Dollhopf for providing the sermon for this worship while I am on vacation.

. . Pastor Kirk Bish

Introduction

As Solomon prays for wisdom, we seek to more deeply know the treasures of faith. In today's gospel Jesus offers everyday images that reveal to us the reign of God: a tree that becomes a sheltering home, yeast that penetrates and expands, a treasured pearl, a net that gains a great catch. Even as we seek the riches of God's reign, the great surprise is that God's grace finds us first!

Brief Order for Confession and Forgiveness

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Let us confess our sins to God our Father.

Holy and Gracious God, I confess that I have sinned against You in many ways. Some of my sins I know – the thoughts and words and deeds of which I am very ashamed – but some are known only to You. In the Name of Christ I ask Your forgiveness. Deliver and restore me, and help me to be obedient to Your will.

The Almighty and merciful God grant to you, being penitent, pardon, and remission of all your sins, time for amendment of life, and the grace and comfort of His Holy Spirit. Amen.

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

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

Amen.

CANTICLE OF PRAISE

Glory be to God in heaven; peace, goodwill to all the earth.

Mighty God of all creation, Father of surpassing worth:

we exalt you, we adore you, we lift high our thanks and praise.

Saints and angels bow before you; here on earth our songs we raise.

Glory be to Christ forever, Lamb of God and Lord of love.

Son of God and gracious Savior, you have come from heav'n above;

on the cross you died to save us; now you reign at God's right hand.

Hear our prayer; restore, forgive us; in your promise firm we stand.

Holy One we now acclaim you; Lord alone, to you we call;

Holy One in faith we name you, God most high, yet near to all:

Jesus Christ, with God the Spirit, in the Father's splendor bright.

For the peace that we inherit, glory be to God on high!

Let us pray:

Prayer of the Day

Beloved and sovereign God, through the death and resurrection of your Son you bring us into your kingdom of justice and mercy. By your Spirit, give us your wisdom, that we may treasure the life that comes from Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

First Reading: 1 Kings 3:5-12

Because Solomon did not ask for long life, riches, or the defeat of his enemies, God gave him what he asked for: wisdom to govern the people well.

⁵At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, "Ask what I should give you." ⁶And Solomon said, "You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you; and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love, and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. ⁷And now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in.

⁸And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people, so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. ⁹Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this your great people?"

¹⁰It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. ¹¹God said to him, "Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches, or for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, ¹²I now do according to your word. Indeed I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you and no one like you shall arise after you."

The Word of the Lord: **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm: Psalm 119:129-136

¹²⁹Your de- | crees are wonderful;
therefore I obey them with | all my heart.

¹³⁰**When your word is opened | it gives light;
it gives understanding | to the simple.**

¹³¹I open my | mouth and pant
because I long for | your commandments.

¹³²**Turn to me and be gra- | cious to me,
as you always do to those who | love your name.**

¹³³Order my footsteps | in your word;
let no iniquity have dominion | over me.

¹³⁴**Rescue me from those | who oppress me,
and I will keep | your commandments.**

¹³⁵Let your face shine up- | on your servant
and teach | me your statutes.

¹³⁶**My eyes shed | streams of tears,
because people do not | keep your teaching.**

Second Reading: Romans 8:26-39

These words celebrate the depth of God's actions for us. Through Christ's death for us and the activity of the Spirit praying for us, we are fused to God's love poured out in Jesus Christ. Nothing, not even death itself, is able to separate us from such incredible divine love.

²⁶The Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. ²⁷And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

²⁸We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.

²⁹For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. ³⁰And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

³¹What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³²He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? ³³Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. ³⁵Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶As it is written,

"For your sake we are being killed all day long;
we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered."

³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Word of the Lord: **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation

***Alleluia. Many will come from | east and west* and will eat in the king-
| dom of heaven. Alleluia. (Matt. 8:11)***

The Gospel

The holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 13th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel: Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

Throughout Matthew's gospel, Jesus and his disciples proclaim the good news that "the kingdom of heaven is near!" Here, Jesus offers several brief parables that explore the implications of this announcement for people's lives.

³¹[Jesus] put before [the crowds] another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field;³² it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."

³³He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened."

⁴⁴"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

⁴⁵Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; ⁴⁶on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

⁴⁷Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; ⁴⁸when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad.

⁴⁹So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous ⁵⁰and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

⁵¹"Have you understood all this?" They answered, "Yes." ⁵²And he said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old."

The Gospel of the Lord: Praise to you, O Christ.

THE SERMON:

Pastor James Dollhopf

We live in a world of turmoil. I guess, though, we always have. Nations have always challenged nations. And people have always looked out for themselves. That is just life we say. Just get used to it!

I can't. I doubt that you can too. To see someone pushed aside, talked down to, or ridiculed is hard to see. Or, even worse, to experience it ourselves. Though, sometimes, we do deserve it.

Yet, what really changes us? Well, when we get caught doing something wrong, or inappropriate, or just plain foolish, it can really stop us, make us feel hurt, and make us vow never to do that again...until the next time. That just doesn't change us, does it?

Nor do many things in our lives truly change us. Oh, some do it for a while. A new car, a new home, or a raise in salary can pick us up, at least for a time. Still, eventually, we discover we really haven't changed. Oh, we may feel better, but we still are who we are.

What changes us is right there in today's Gospel. Words and revelations that truly lift our lives, and make us feel and know we are someone to God.

There is the yeast. I like to bake bread and watch the bread rise into a tasty loaf. Oh, the joy! Oh, the joy of heaven's yeast. The yeast of God's love that makes us rise into new life. Too often expressions of faith, people of faith, and clergy put limits and conditions on that love. That is wrong. That love is there always and is never taken away. We are God's and always will be. Let that lift you up.

And where is that love? It is in our lives. Too often it is hidden in our lives. Too many things to do, to accomplish, to sort out. That love is covered up and denied or we are told that we must deserve it. But it is there. Always will be. Let that love embrace you.

And when we allow ourselves to feel that love, everything else that challenges our lives seems to fall away. God's love never is taken away.

So we are held in that net of life, that net of love. So many things that bother us and hurt us, may drop away.

Oh, I know that our world is in turmoil. There are many things that hurt us and threaten us. But remember, God's love is always with us. We don't earn it, it is ours. We may not deserve it, but it is ours. We may doubt it, yet it is ours.

That is our treasure. God's love never ends.

Amen.

THE APOSTLES' CREED

Let us now confess our faith with the words of the Apostles' 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 into hell,
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

Confident of your care and helped by the Holy Spirit, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

Merciful God, your reign is revealed to us in common things: a mustard shrub, a woman baking bread, a fishing net. Help your church witness to the surprising yet common ways you encounter us in daily life. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

When your word is opened, it gives light and understanding. Increase our understanding and awe of your creation; guide the work of scientists and researchers. Treasuring the earth, may we live as grateful and healing caretakers of our home. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

As the birds of the air nest in branches of trees, gather the nations of the world into the welcoming shade of your merciful reign. Direct leaders of nations to build trust with each other and walk in the way of peace. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Your Spirit helps us in our weakness and intercedes for the saints according to your will. Help us when we do not know how to pray. Give comfort to the dying, refuge to the weary, justice to those who are oppressed, and healing to the sick especially **Kiersten Zomolsky, Richard DelPercio, Kenny Shoemaker, Richard and Kathy Hefflin, Pastor Cyril Hurnyak, Pat Brick, Greg Waldfogle, Merlinda Bisese, the family of Pastor James Dollhopf, those suffering from the coronavirus, and those whom we now name in our hearts before You** . Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

You show steadfast love and direct us to ask of you what we need. Help this congregation ask boldly for what is most needed. Refresh us with new dreams of being your people in this place and time. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Caring God, be with us as we continue to live through this coronavirus pandemic. Grant us the grace to look to You, who turns all things to the good for them that love You. Grant the necessary wisdom and success to our scientists and doctors who strive to find the cures and vaccines so that this pandemic may be overcome and that we may return to a more normal life. May we show Christian compassion as we reach out to those experiencing grief and need during this time. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

In you our lives are never lost. Strengthen us by the inspiring witness of your people in all times and places. Embolden our witness now and one day gather us with all your saints in light. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

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

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and continue to teach us to pray:

**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.**

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.
In the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Dismissal

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

As you conclude your worship, you may wish to hear the Hymn: "My Faith Looks Up to Thee" by using the address below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X5g-Att0bmE>

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