



THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY  
AFTER PENTECOST  
Bethel-Hemnes Lutheran Church  
September 27, 2020

*Jesus' parable about two sons who don't do what they say reveals surprises in the reign of God, such as prostitutes and tax collectors going before others into God's kingdom. In the reading from Ezekiel the people question whether the ways of the Lord are unfair; instead they are to repent and turn to the Lord. Paul urges us to look to Christ as a model of humility, looking to the interests of others above our own. Strengthened by Word and Sacrament, we go out to be people of hospitality, generous in faith, hope, and love.*

†GATHERING†

CONFESSON AND FORGIVENESS

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism.*

- P. We are gathered in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.  
C. Amen.
- P. Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and one another.  
*Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.*
- P. Heavenly Father,  
C. we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, forgive our sin, increase our faith, strengthen us in service, and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.
- P. God, who is rich in mercy loved us even when we were dead in sin and made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved. (*Eph 2:4-5*) By the authority of Christ, I declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sin, in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
- C. Amen.

GREETING

- P. Holy people of God, called through the gospel of Christ, enlightened by the Spirit: grace, mercy, and peace be with you all.  
C. And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

- P. God of love, giver of life, You know our frailties and failings. Give us Your grace to overcome them; keep us from those things that harm us; and guide us in the way of salvation; through Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. C. Amen.

## † WORD †

### FIRST READING: Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

*The prophet Ezekiel challenges those who think they cannot change because of what their parents were and did, or who think they cannot turn from their wicked ways. God insistently invites people to turn and live.*

The word of the LORD came to me:<sup>2</sup> What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, “The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge”? <sup>3</sup> As I live, says the Lord GOD, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. <sup>4</sup> Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins that shall die.

<sup>25</sup> Yet you say, “The way of the Lord is unfair.” Hear now, O house of Israel: Is My way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? <sup>26</sup> When the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed they shall die. <sup>27</sup> Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. <sup>28</sup> Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. <sup>29</sup> Yet the house of Israel says, “The way of the Lord is unfair.” O house of Israel, are My ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair?

<sup>30</sup> Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord GOD. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin. <sup>31</sup> Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against Me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? <sup>32</sup> For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord GOD. Turn, then, and live.

The Word of the Lord. C. Thanks be to God.

### Psalm 25:1-8

To You, O LORD, I lift up my soul; my God, I put my trust in You;  
let me not be humiliated, nor let my enemies triumph over me.

<sup>2</sup> Let none who look to You be put to shame;  
let the treacherous be disappointed in their schemes.

<sup>3</sup> Show me Your ways, O LORD,  
and teach me Your paths.

<sup>4</sup> Lead me in Your truth and teach me,  
for You are the God of my salvation; in You have I trusted all the day long.

<sup>5</sup> Remember, O LORD, Your compassion and love,  
for they are from everlasting.

<sup>6</sup> Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions;  
remember me according to Your love  
and for the sake of Your goodness, O LORD.

<sup>7</sup> Gracious and upright is the LORD;

therefore He teaches sinners in his way.

<sup>8</sup>He guides the humble in doing right  
and teaches his way to the lowly.

## SECOND READING: Philippians 2:1-13

*As part of a call for harmony rather than self-seeking, Paul uses a very early Christian hymn that extols the selflessness of Christ in His obedient death on the cross. Christ's selfless perspective is to be the essential perspective we share as the foundation for Christian accord.*

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, <sup>2</sup>make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. <sup>3</sup>Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. <sup>4</sup>Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. <sup>5</sup>Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

<sup>6</sup>who, though He was in the form of God,  
did not regard equality with God  
as something to be exploited,  
<sup>7</sup>but emptied himself,  
taking the form of a slave,  
being born in human likeness.

And being found in human form,  
<sup>8</sup>He humbled himself  
and became obedient to the point of death--  
even death on a cross.

<sup>9</sup>Therefore God also highly exalted Him  
and gave Him the name  
that is above every name,  
<sup>10</sup>so that at the name of Jesus  
every knee should bend,  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,  
<sup>11</sup>and every tongue should confess  
that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father.

<sup>12</sup>Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence,  
but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;  
<sup>13</sup>for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

The Word of the Lord. C. Thanks be to God.

## HOLY GOSPEL: St. Matthew 21:23-32

*Shortly after arriving in Jerusalem, Jesus drives the moneychangers out of the temple, heals the sick, and begins teaching there. His authority is questioned by the religious leaders who are supposed to be in charge of the temple.*

### C. Glory to You, O Lord.

When [Jesus] entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to Him as He was teaching, and said, “By what authority are You doing these things, and who gave You this authority?”<sup>24</sup> Jesus said to them, “I will also ask you one question; if you tell Me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things.<sup>25</sup> Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?” And they argued with one another, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ He will say to us, ‘Why then did you not believe him?’<sup>26</sup> But if we say, ‘Of human origin,’ we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet.”<sup>27</sup> So they answered Jesus, “We do not know.” And He said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

<sup>28</sup>“What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’<sup>29</sup> He answered, ‘I will not’; but later he changed his mind and went.<sup>30</sup> The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, ‘I go, sir’; but he did not go.<sup>31</sup> Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you.<sup>32</sup> For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.”

### P. The Gospel of the Lord.

### C. Praise to You, O Christ.

## SERMON

## HYMN OF THE DAY

*Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word*

1 Lord, keep us steadfast in your word; curb those who  
2 Lord Je - sus Christ, your pow'r make known, for you are  
3 O Com - fort - er of price - less worth, send peace and

by de - ceit or sword would wrest the king - dom from your Son  
Lord of lords a - lone; de - fend your ho - ly church, that we  
u - ni - ty on earth; sup - port us in our fi - nal strife

and may and bring sing lead to your us naught praise all e - out he ter - of death has nal - to done. ly. life.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

## SHARING THE PEACE OF THE LORD

## THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son,  
our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the  
Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.

He 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, and is seated  
at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again 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

## † PRAYER †

## OFFERING

If you have not signed up for electronic giving, you can mail your offering in to Bethel (P.O. Box 126, Porter, 56280), you may drop it in the offering box at the church, or you may make your offering online at our website ([www.bethelofporter.com](http://www.bethelofporter.com)).

## OFFERTORY PRAYER

- P. God our provider,  
C. all that we have is a sign of Your love; all that we are is a gift from Your hand.  
Receive our offerings along with our thanksgiving, that our lives may proclaim  
Jesus Christ our Lord. 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.*

Throughout the globe is the Church: many assemblies are postponed by the virus, our songs quieted, our leaders searching for new ways forward. That You will give Your Church unity and continue to inspire all the baptized with the mind of Christ, Lord, in Your mercy,

- C. hear our prayer.

Your Son took on all of bodily life in our world, even to death. Around us nature is strained: polar ice is melting, excessive rains ravage the land, fires consume forests, fields, and homes, and animals are deprived of habitat. That you will preserve and protect the earth, so that all of creation confesses You as Lord, Lord, in Your mercy,

- C. hear our prayer.

Around us is a needy world: governments allow injustice, violence threatens stability, people experience prejudice, reforms are hindered, workers are unemployed, medical facilities are strained, children are abused. That You will save the people in all the nations of the world, Lord, in Your mercy,

- C. hear our prayer.

In our nation's courts, we see justice delayed and denied. Yet we thank You for the life of Ruth Bader Ginsburg and for her passion for equality under the law. That You will uphold honest judges and insightful juries throughout our criminal justice system, and that You will assist our nation in its task of filling the Supreme Court, Lord, in Your mercy,

- C. hear our prayer.

Our lives are Yours, O Christ. Relieve the suffering of those who are ill in body, mind or spirit: those who are starving, those who are struggling with the virus, those who receive no medical attention, and especially those in our community whom we lift up before You: Merv, Emily, Angie, Shirlee, Lynette, Brenda, Bill and Karen Polen, Bill Ningen, and Roman. Wrap Your arms of comfort around all those who grieve, especially the family and friends of Doug Pearson. Lord, in Your mercy,

- C. hear our prayer.

Nearby are needs of which we are unaware. That you will send your holy angels to uphold all who face personal troubles, Lord, in Your mercy,

- C. hear our prayer.

Turn our congregation away from our own interests toward the interests of others. Fill us with Your compassion and sympathy and make us into signs of Your mercy and justice for our neighbors. That you will give us new hearts and a new spirit, Lord, in Your mercy,

C. hear our prayer.

Thank You for those who have gone into the kingdom ahead of us — the famous and the forgotten, our relatives and strangers, today we remember especially Justice Ginsberg and Doug Pearson. We lament their deaths, and we praise their witness. That we may confess Jesus Christ as Lord through our life and at our death, Lord, in Your mercy,

C. hear our prayer.

Gracious and merciful God, slow to anger, rich in love, we bless Your name and give You thanks. In our need, You make haste to help us and we trust in Your mercy. You plant us beside streams of Your wisdom, teach us in pastures greening with truth, and guide us on the path of Your promise. By Your Spirit awaken our faith, that, feasting on Your Word, we may love You more fully and serve our neighbor more faithfully; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C. Amen.

#### THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

† SENDING †

#### BLESSING

P. People of God, stand firm in one spirit; strive side by side for the faith of the gospel; let your gentleness be known by everyone; and the God of peace, the Father, the + Son, and the Holy Spirit, be with you and bless you now and forever.

C. Amen

## CLOSING HYMN

*The Lord Now Sends Us Forth*

*En - via - do soy de Dios, mi ma - no lis - taes - tá  
The Lord now sends us forth with hands to serve and give,*

*pa - ra cons - truir con él un mun - do fra - ter - nal. Repeat  
to make of all the earth a bet - ter place to live.*

*Los án - ge - les no son en - via - dos a cam - biar  
The an - gels are not sent in - to our world of pain*

*un mun - do de do - lor por un mun - do me - jor;  
to do what we were meant to do in Je - sus' name;*

*me ha to - ca - do a mí ha - cer - lo rea - li - dad.  
that falls to you and me and all who are made free.*

*A - yú - da - me, Se - ñor, aha - cer tu vo - lun - tad.  
Help us, O Lord, we pray, to do your will to - day. Repeat*

## DISMISSAL

- P. Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
 C. Thanks be to God.

## Those who Serve:

Ministers: All the People of God  
Organist: Lou Knutson

Presider: Pastor Ellen Munter  
Reader: Sara Wollum

## How to reach us:

Church Office: 507-296-4658  
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Bethel web page: [www.bethelofporter.com](http://www.bethelofporter.com)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Offering: During this period of suspended in-person worship services, Bethel and Hemnes continue to have recurring expenses. Please remember to give financially to support the ministry of our congregations. For Bethel, you may mail your offering to the church office or give online at <http://bit.ly/givebethel>

## September 20, 2020

General: \$1,180.50 (\$529.50 received through eGiving)

Savings: \$315.00

Includes: In Memory of Curtis Blumeyer: \$70.00 for online service resources and \$45.00 undesignated. \$200.00 for cemetery plots.



Merv Anderson, Emily Morton, Angie Denelsbeck Anderson  
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Bill Ningan, Roman Mamer and family and friends of Doug Pearson

## Acknowledgements

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