



St. John's Lutheran Church, ELCA

"A Legacy of Worship and Outreach in San Antonio since 1857"

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26th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A
September 27, 2020

Welcome! In this week's Gospel, Jesus' parable about two sons who don't do what they say reveals surprises in the reign of God. In the reading from the Prophet Ezekiel, the people claim the ways of the Lord are unfair, while God offers repentance and new life. And in his letter to the Philippians, Paul urges us to look to Christ as a model of humility, putting the interests of others above our own. Nourished in our worship together by both Word and Sacrament, may we learn to offer our lives for the sake of our needy world.



Prelude and Bells

Adagio in E Major by Frank Bridge

Welcome and Announcements

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the Holy Trinity, † one God,
who creates, redeems, and sustains us and all of creation.
Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

(Silence for personal reflection)

Faithful God,
have mercy on us.
We confess that we are captive to sin
and cannot free ourselves.
We turn from your loving embrace
and go our own ways.
We pass judgment on one another
before examining ourselves.
We place our own needs before those of our neighbors.
We keep your gift of salvation to ourselves.
Make us humble, cast away our transgressions,
and turn us again to life in you
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

God hears the cries of all who call out in need,
and through his death and resurrection,
Christ has made us his own.
Hear the truth that God proclaims:
Your sins are forgiven in the name of † Jesus Christ.
Led by the Holy Spirit, live in freedom and newness
to do God's work in the world.
Amen.

Choir

Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service

Greeting

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.

Prayer of the Day

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 Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

First Reading

Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

¹The word of the Lord came to me: ²What 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"? ³As I live, says the Lord God, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. ⁴Know 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.

²⁵Yet 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? ²⁶When 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. ²⁷Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. ²⁸Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. ²⁹Yet 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?

³⁰Therefore 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. ³¹Cast 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? ³²For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord God. Turn, then, and live.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Second Reading

Philippians 2:1-13

¹If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, ²make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. ⁴Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. ⁵Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

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

And being found in human form, ⁸he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross.

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

¹²Therefore, 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; ¹³for 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.

Thanks be to God.

The Holy Gospel

Matthew 21:23-32

The good news of Jesus Christ according to St. Matthew:

Glory to you, O Lord.

²³When [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?" ²⁴Jesus 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. ²⁵Did 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?' ²⁶But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet." ²⁷So 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.

²⁸"What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' ²⁹He answered, 'I will not'; but later he changed his mind and went. ³⁰The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir'; but he did not go. ³¹Which 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. ³²For 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."

The Gospel of the Lord:

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Pastor James Dew

Anthem

Apostles' Creed

With the whole Church in heaven and on earth, we confess our faith...

**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 to the dead.
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

Drawn together in the compassion of God, we pray for the Church, the world, and all those in need:

In all the world, give your Church unity. Inspire all the baptized with the mind of Christ. Where the Church is powerful and where it struggles, shape us with humility and obedience so that your love may be at work in us. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Your Son took on all of bodily life in our world, even to death. Preserve and keep your creation, O God. Mend and redeem places that are polluted and damaged, so that all of creation confesses you as Lord. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Turn the nations toward life. Where our ways are unfair, give us new hearts and new spirits. Where sin permeates our cultures and institutions, change our minds and teach us to trust your authority. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Our lives are yours, O God. Relieve the suffering of those who are ill in body, mind, or spirit, including *Bob Cauble, Chris Gates, Danny Myers, Janice Williams, Ralph Detwiler, Claudine Michalek, Kim Friesenhahn, Kenny and Cherie Knippa, Jeff and Lori Sackett, Frances Franz, Alwin Schaefer, Bill Brewer, Paul Mason, Paul and Gloria Boenisch, Beth Knox, Tom Bartholomew, Lee Iredale, Mary Jane Schessenhagen, Dean Olson, Joe Reiner, Jonathan Sulaica*, as well as those whom we also name. Defend the lives and welfare of children who are abused or neglected, hungry or exploited, bullied or lonely. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Bless the ministries of care in our community. Shape us into signs of your mercy and justice for our neighbors. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

All these things and whatever else you see that we need, we entrust to your mercy, O God, through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you. (Please verbally greet those nearest you these or similar words: "Peace be with you.")

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Blessed are you, Lord of heaven and earth, endless is your mercy and eternal your reign.
Praise to you for the grace you've shown to your people in every age:
the promise to Israel, the rescue from Egypt, the words of the prophets;
and, at this end of all the ages, the gift of your Son,
who proclaimed the good news in word and deed,
and was obedient to your will, even to giving his life.

For on the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this, as often as you drink of it, for the remembrance of me.

As often as we eat of this bread and drink of this cup,
we proclaim our Lord's death until he comes:

Christ has died. Christ has risen. Christ will come again.

Pour out upon us, O Lord, your Holy Spirit,
uniting us through this Holy Sacrament,
breathing new life into us, and sending us forth,
as the body of Christ, for the sake of the world. **Amen.**

Remember us, Lord, in your kingdom, and help 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.**

Agnus Dei

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: **Have mercy on us.**

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: **Have mercy on us.**

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: **Grant us peace. Amen.**

Holy Communion

We believe that Christ is truly present in the consecrated bread and wine and we welcome all who wish to receive the Holy Sacrament. During this time of pandemic, individual servings of the Eucharist are being offered in the pews at the direction of the Pastor.

Communion Prayer

We give you thanks, Gracious God,
that you have once again fed us with food beyond compare,
the Body and Blood of Christ.
Lead us from this place, nourished and forgiven,
out into your beloved vineyard;
to wipe away the tears of all who hunger and thirst.
Guide us in the Way of Jesus,
and lead us by your Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Benediction

Almighty God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you, protect you, and bring you to everlasting life. **Amen.**

Choir

Hallelujah! We Sing Your Praises

Dismissal

Let us go in peace and seek the ways of the Lord.

In the Name of Christ. Amen.

Postlude

Allegro Marziale by Frank Bridge

Worship is central to who we are as a people of God. Every time we gather to hear and respond to the Word, to offer up our prayers for the needs of many, and to receive Christ's living presence in the consecrated bread and wine, we seek to "become what we receive", namely, the Body of Christ for the sake of the life of the world. As we are gathered, fed, and then sent back out in mission, God empowers us to be bearers of blessing and vessels of grace, commissioning us to intentionally live out the reign of God throughout the course of our weekly living.

This Week at St. John's

Today, September 27 @ 8:30am
Today, September 27 @ 10:00am
Wednesday, Sept 30 @ 12:15pm

Pastor's Class
Worship
Word, Silence, and Prayer - Online
(<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88016564149>)

*Please see our online calendar at www.stjohnssa.org for other events.
For prayer requests, please contact the church office
(210) 223-2611 or info@StJohnsSA.org*

Opportunities to Make a Positive Difference

CAM Clothing Needs CAM is currently accepting gently-used clothing items for both adult men and women; casual wear, jeans, khakis, t-shirts, tennis shoes, and athletic shoes. (They are not accepting at this time any slacks, suits, heels, men's dress shoes, prom dresses, or business wear.) Contact Sarah Kory at skory@cam-sa.org or call 210-223-4099 with any questions.

CAM Sandwiches Every other Tuesday, we deliver sandwiches to CAM to help feed others. The next date is October 06. If you would like more information about this ministry and how you can lend support, please contact Bea Imken at 210-887-2217.

Lutheran Disaster Response The ELCA is often the first on the scene to provide emergency help and continued assistance whenever trouble strikes. Right now, the Lutheran Disaster Response is in need of your generous donations to speed aid to those whose lives have been impacted by recent hurricanes, wildfires, and other calamities. You can donate at <https://www.elca.org/Our-Work/Relief-and-Development/Lutheran-Disaster-Response>

Synodical Ministries Closer to home, you can donate to any number of our own synodical ministries at <https://www.swtsynod.org/give>



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

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