

AUGUSTANA
where Lutherans and Anglicans worship together

Pentecost 15 September 20, 2020
ELW Service of Word & Prayer

Welcome to worship.

Thanks to worship assistant Faith Rohrbough, musicians Deb Buck, Ted Warren, and choir members, tech people Bryan and Greg.

Season of creation: From now until the commemoration of Francis of Assisi on October 4 we are in the Season of Creation. This season of creation is a time we share with Christians of many differing backgrounds and worship traditions from around the world. In this season we acknowledge the wonder of God's gift of creation.

Blessing of our bags:

GATHERING SONG "Let All Things Now Living" # 881

Let all things now living a song of thanksgiving
To God the creator triumphantly raise.
Who fashioned and made us, protected and stayed us,
Who still guides us on to the end of our days.
God's banners are o'er us, God's light goes before us,
A pillar of fire shining forth in the night.
Till shadows have vanished and darkness is banished
As forward we travel from light into light.

God rules all the forces, the stars in their courses
And sun in its orbit obediently shine;
The hills and the mountains, the rivers and fountains,
The deeps of the ocean proclaim God divine.
We too should be voicing our love and rejoicing;
With glad adoration a song let us raise
Till all things now living unite in thanksgiving:
"To God in the highest, Hosanna and praise!"

GREETING

As we begin our time of worship we ask that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all.

KYRIE

Lord, have mercy, Christ, have mercy.
 Lord, have mercy, have mercy, O Lord. (sing twice)

GLORY TO GOD

Refrain: Glory to God, glory to God, glory to God in the highest; glory to God, glory to God, and peace to God's people on earth.

1. Lord God, heavenly king, almighty God and Father. We worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory. .../refrain
2. Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us; you are seated on the right hand of the Father; receive our prayer. .../refrain
3. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen. .../refrain

CHILDREN'S TIME

Jonah was given a job to do: to warn the people of Nineveh to change their ways

The people in the vineyard were given a job to do: to pick the grapes at the right time.

We all have work to do from day to day.

- My work to be at home for the time being
- bags

Loving God: We ask your blessing on the bags we carry with us as we travel from day to day: backpacks, bookbags, briefcases, diaper bags, tool kits. These bags hold the work that has been done and the work still left to do as they travel from home to school and work and back again. As we carry these bags, may we be reminded that God accompanies us everywhere we go.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray: God of deep compassion, you welcome the weak and free us from the bondage of sin. Break the cycle of judgement and violence through Jesus our forgiveness, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

A reading from Jonah 3:10-4:11

When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.

But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. He prayed to the LORD and said, 'O LORD! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing. And now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live.' And the LORD said, 'Is it right for you to be angry?' Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city, and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city.

The LORD God appointed a bush, and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort; so Jonah was very happy about the bush. But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, 'It is better for me to die than to live.'

But God said to Jonah, 'Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?' And he said, 'Yes, angry enough to die.' Then the LORD said, 'You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labour and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who do not know their right hand from their left, and also many animals?'

Word of God, Word of life **thanks be to God**

ALLELUIA

Alleluia, Lord, to whom shall we go? Alleluia. You have the words of eternal life.

Alleluia, alleluia.

GOSPEL:

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew chapter 20:1-16

Glorify to you, O Lord

'For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire labourers for his vineyard. After agreeing with

the labourers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the market-place; and he said to them, "You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right." So they went. When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, "Why are you standing here idle all day?" They said to him, "Because no one has hired us." He said to them, "You also go into the vineyard." When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, "Call the labourers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first." When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, saying, "These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat." But he replied to one of them, "Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?" So the last will be first, and the first will be last.'

The Gospel of our Lord, **Praise to you, O Christ**

SPECIAL MUSIC "In the Garden"

MEDITATION

Grace to you and peace from the owner of the vineyard. Amen.

The garden .. the vineyard ... a beautiful place to be. And Jonah seated under the shade of his lovely bush. Both sound quite idyllic until one listens more closely: "It's not fair" or "she got more than me" rings out in the vineyard. And

Jonah angrily calls out that the people deserved retribution not forgiveness. It's not fair ... it's not right.

We learn from an early age that things should be fair ... as we get older we have to acknowledge that life is often not fair. BUT still fairness is the norm that we long for.

As we have been reading through the gospel of Matthew we have been exploring God's mercy. Looking first at forgiveness and, now, moving on to generosity -- Forgiveness and generosity go well together. And, today that's how we find out that God is NOT fair! God plays favorites!

In Jesus parable we hear about the owner of the vineyard who is not fair, but we know that Jesus is really telling us about God ... not just some anonymous employer who paid some workers better than others. A rather prodigal employer who doled out wages in a rather rash way.

Generosity for those who really needed it – because the ones who had to wait all day hoping for a job must have really needed the work so that they could feed their families.

I'd like to draw us back again to who is sharing this story with us. Matthew ... The Gospel of Matthew whose hearers were mostly Jewish Christians.

People who had been part of God's covenant for generations ... not like the newcomer Christians who came from outside the faith. What do you mean these guys get the same thing as us ... we have been here forever They just got here Shouldn't there be a different, slightly less outcome for them? Two-tiered salvation?

Nope It's not fair This is an age old challenge ... for the well established to let in others with willingness and the same generosity as God

Forgiveness and open armed generosity go together

.... But so does the cry for fairness and blame

Erma Bombeck – “My favorite child”

It is true also in God's home country “a child needs God's love more when they deserve it least.”

For God has a favorite child. God cannot help it, because it is in God's nature to care deeply and to have a special closeness for the child in need – to reach out to the child who is lost and lonely. God's favorite child is the one who made a mistake and messed up her life. God's favorite child is the one who had a fight with his family and is lonely for them now. God's favorite child is the one who drank too much or gambled too much. God's favorite child is too sick to leave home. God's favorite child is having chemotherapy or radiation therapy. God's favorite child is waiting for surgery or recovering from surgery. God's favorite child is grieving the death of someone they loved. God's favorite child is depressed because of things she can't change. God's favorite child is pulling the pieces of his life together after a hurricane Or fire or pandemic. Who is God's favorite child? Sometimes it's you Sometimes it's me ...Sometimes it's your neighbor next door Sometimes it's your neighbor on the other side of the world.... It is the child who needs God the most.

So it's true: God is not fair ... God is generous. Giving extra love and care to those who need it. Let us learn from Jesus' story not to begrudge others the care they

need.... To be generous ... to accept God's prodigal generosity towards others.

Like Jonah, who are we to disagree?

SONG "Great Is Thy Faithfulness" # 733

Great is Thy faithfulness, " O God my Father,
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not
As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.

Refrain:

Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided—
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest,
Sun, moon and stars in their courses above,
Join with all nature in manifold witness
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love. .../refrain

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

- *In our prayer of confession I will pause so that we have time to reflect on how we have not loved our neighbour: whether our neighbours are people or creation. If you wish to have a longer time to reflect you can pause the video and take as much time as you need.*

Most merciful God, we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not love you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves. [pause]

For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

And since God treats us as Jesus did tax collectors and outsiders we hear these words of assurance and forgiveness: God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace we have been saved. In the name of Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen us with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in our hearts through faith. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Let us join hearts and voices together in prayer. Each short prayer will end with the words “Lord in your mercy” and you can make the prayer your own by responding “**hear our prayer.**”

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

A brief silence.

Generous God, you make the last first, and the first last. Where this gospel challenges the church, equip it for its works of service. Strengthen those who suffer for Christ. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Lead and guide your church. We pray for The Provincial Synod of the Ecclesiastical Province of British Columbia and Yukon and the dean, council, and congregations of the Southern Interior Region of the British Columbia Synod. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Sun and wind, bushes and worms, cattle and great cities – nothing in creation is outside your concern, mighty God. In your mercy, tend to it all. Teach us how to live wisely within your creation. Comfort those who have lived through wind and killing fire. Protect and provide all who are now homeless because of wild fire. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Protect all who live in uncertainty and precarious situations: especially the Iqbal and Alhamad/Wahid families . Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Bring peace to places of conflict and violence. Inspire leaders with creativity and wisdom. Bless the work of negotiators, peacekeepers, and development workers. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Hear the prayers of Tristen DeRocher as he cries out for a plan to address the pain of indigenous youth. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Tend to all in need of your compassion. Hear the cries of those awaiting justice and those yearning for forgiveness. Give community to the lonely and neighbours to the outcast. Shelter all who are vulnerable in body, mind, or spirit *especially* Bruce, Gloria, Logan, William, Marcus, Brodie, Karin, Anthony, Robert, Curtis, Linda, Marci, Gayle, Evelyn, Lisa, Danielle, Inger, Anne Jane, Deanna, Ron, Marlene, those who feel a sense of isolation during this pandemic and for all those we name aloud or in the silence of our hearts

(a pause to offer time to name others)

..... Hold them all in your care. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Teach us how to live and work and learn in community. Be with teachers, professors, school administrators and students in this new school year. Support those who work as caregivers. Guide those who work in medical research. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We praise you for the generations that have declared your mercy to us. Give us faithfulness to follow them, living for Christ, until you call us to join them. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

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

Amen.

Pastor Marilyn: Knowing how God loves us as a Mother and Father we pray in the words Jesus taught us:

LORD'S PRAYER

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

May the blessing of God who is Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be with you now and always. AMEN.

SENDING SONG "On Our Way Rejoicing" # 537

On our way rejoicing, gladly let us go,
 Christ our Lord has conquered, vanquished is the foe.
 Christ without, our safety; Christ within our joy;
 Who, if we be faithful, can our hope destroy?

Refrain:

On our way rejoicing,
 As we forward move,
 Hearken to our praises,
 O blest God of love!

Unto God the Father joyful songs we sing;
 Unto God the Saviour thankful hearts we bring;
 Unto God the Spirit bow we and adore,
 On our way rejoicing now and evermore. .../refrain

DISMISSAL

Go now and revel in God's world
 Go now to be creative and work for justice
 Go now to love your neighbour
 Go now to love and serve the Lord
 THANKS BE TO GOD. AMEN.

+ + +

Zoom Holy Communion 2 pm Sunday

To join Zoom Meeting

Click on this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89549800180>

YOU CAN ALSO JOIN IN BY PHONE:

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Great is thy faithfulness

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Let all things now living

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On our way rejoicing

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