

20 September 2020. 10:30AM.
16th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

CONCORDIA

Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod
725 Truxton Drive, Kingsport, TN.

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It is by faith in
His forgiveness
that our works
are “*worthy of
the gospel*”

Phil. 1:27

COLLECT

Lord God, heavenly Father, since we cannot stand before You relying on anything we have done, help us trust in Your abiding grace and live according to Your Word; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

INTROIT

I will offer to you the sacrifice of thanks- | giving* and call on the name | of the LORD. **What shall I render | to the LORD* for all his bene- | fits to me?** I will lift up the cup of sal- | vation* and call on the name | of the LORD. **Precious in the sight | of the LORD* is the death | of his saints.** O LORD, I am your | servant;* I am your servant, the son of your maidservant. You have | loosed my bonds. **Glory to the Father and | to the Son* and to the Holy | Spirit; as it was in the be- | ginning,* is now, and will be forever. | Amen.** I will offer to you the sacrifice of thanks- | giving* and call on the name | of the LORD.

READINGS

Old Testament/ Isaiah 55:6–9. **Epistle/** Phil. 1:12–14, 19–30. **Gospel/** Matthew 20:1–16
Disciples Live in Their Vocations by Grace through Faith in Christ

- Those who are sent as “*laborers for his vineyard*” (Matt. 20:1) depict the wide diversity of vocations to which the disciples of Christ Jesus are called. Whatever our particular stations in life may be, we are called to live and serve by faith in His promises. Our labors do not merit anything before Him, for He is already generous to one and all without partiality. In mercy, He has chosen to bear “*the burden of the day and the scorching heat*” on our behalf, to make us equal to Himself and to give us what belongs to Him, that is, the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 20:12–15).
- This way of the Lord is foolishness to the world and foreign to our thoughts, but He draws near, so that “*he may be found*” (Is. 55:6), “*have compassion*” and “*abundantly pardon*” (Is. 55:7).
- So it is that we are found in Christ Jesus, and He is honored in our bodies, “*whether by life or by death*” (Phil. 1:20), by “*fruitful labor*” (Phil. 1:22) or by suffering. It is by faith in His forgiveness that our works are “*worthy of the gospel*” (Phil. 1:27).

STEWARDSHIP

Matthew 20:9 – “And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius.”

Behold the generosity of God! He gives out of His grace, not what we deserve to receive. Living a godly life means living in imitation of God, and His generosity is surely one of the foundations of God’s being.

Sermon Notes

+ Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost +
For the Common Good + Philipians 1:21-25

For living to me means simply "Christ", and if I die I should merely gain more of him. I realise, of course, that the work which I have started may make it necessary for me to go on living in this world, I should find it very hard to make a choice. I am torn in two directions—on the one hand I long to leave this world and live with Christ, and that is obviously the best thing for me. Yet, on the other hand, it is probably more necessary for you that I should stay here on earth. That is why I feel pretty well convinced that I shall not leave this world yet, but shall be able to stand by you, to help you forward in Christian living and to find increasing joy in your faith.

Although followers of Jesus are torn in two directions, the desire to follow where Christ leads for the common good outweighs all other thoughts and feelings.

1. I long to leave this world and live with Christ
 - a. We all are infected with homesickness
 - b. That obviously would be the best thing for me.
2. It is probably more necessary for me to stay here on earth
 - a. Many things make us sick and tired of this world
 - b. We are governed by a greater necessity
3. I shall not leave this world quite yet
 - a. "living" to me simply means Christ
 - b. To help y'all forward in Christian faith and find increasing joy

Discipleship Leading to Evangelism.

*When Sunday Worship comes to an end, **the liturgy of the Church** goes into the world with us... through each unique vocation. We are Christ's people, standing in the midst of a broken world. As the Baptized Children of God, we bear witness in our words and lives to the Christ who dwells in us. Our lives testify that Christ's presence in the world transforms the culture and makes it new. To live in Christ is to bear witness that Jesus Christ is present in our world in His gifts. Christ is present in the world through us.... and He is present for the life of the world.*

*Many people today want to know how to be a Christian. What they are really asking is how to live like Christ. The response: **'Be like Christ who lives in you!'** But they will ask: **'What does this mean?'** The answer comes from Jesus' Sermon on the Plain (Luke 6):*

Love your enemies, be merciful, compassionate, forgive, and do works of charity.'

*But they will ask: **'How is this done?'** The answer:*

- ***'Come to church and receive the gifts of Christ's in hearing the Law and the Gospel preached and sung in the liturgy... in feasting at His banquet in Holy Communion.***
- ***Remember your Baptism; repent of your sins and be forgiven and reborn ... ready to serve your God and ready to serve your neighbors and your family...who you can now love.***
- ***And then go out as the Baptized Children of God. Go out into the world and be what you have become in Christ.'***

This is life in Christ.

This is how we continue to tell the world its story about real life in Christ through our lives.

This is the liturgy of life!"

The Rev. John T. Pless

Prayer of the Church. 16th Sunday after Pentecost. 20 September 2020.

In peace, let us pray to the Lord and offer to Him the petitions and supplications of a people confident of His promise to hear and answer us with mercy. That we may seek the Lord while He may be found, call upon Him in the day of salvation, and be prepared by His mercy for the Day of Judgment, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

That we may delight in the light of Christ and His salvation, and that sinners may find refuge in His mercy and comfort in His forgiveness, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

That we may hear the voice of God speaking in His Word and be nurtured by faithful pastors who preach and teach this Gospel, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

That this Word may be the foundation of the home, that husband and wife may be united in this faith and hope, and that their children may hear and be nurtured in this Word by faithful parents, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

That the Church may nurture the lives of our children in Sunday school and catechism classes, and that we may all be grounded in the doctrine of Scripture through the study of God's Word, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

That the Lord may bless missionaries far and near, that He may nurture newly planted congregations, and that He may renew those congregations in distress, that those from every nation and culture may be united with us in faith and life, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

That we may enjoy the blessing of good government, faithful leaders, peace in our land and peace among the nations, and that we may be good citizens and neighbors, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

That the sick may be healed, the troubled know peace, the grieving be comforted and the dying be delivered to everlasting life in Christ, and especially for _____; and that we may all be delivered from fear, anxiety and despair by God's gracious care, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

That we may commune in faith, that no unrepentant sin may hinder our reception of Christ's body and blood, and that the fruits of this communion may be reflected in a manner of life in keeping with who we are as God's children by Baptism and faith, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

That we may honor the Lord with praise and thanksgiving and bring to the Lord the tithes and offerings of a grateful people, That we may not forget the witness of the faithful who lived and died in Christ, and that we may at last be joined with them in the marriage supper of the Lamb in His Kingdom without end, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

Hear the prayers of Your people, O Lord, and grant to us all things good and wholesome and keep from us all things harmful. Give us contentment, that trusting in Your mercy we may delight in Your saving will where the last are made first by Your generosity and grace; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**