

13 September 2020
15th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

CONCORDIA

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

concordiakingsport.org/face



*Free to
Forgive...
as the Lord
Forgives
You.*

Collect

Oh God, our refuge and strength, the author of all godliness, hear the devote prayer of your Church, especially in times of persecution, and grant that what we ask in faith we may obtain; though Jesus Christ Your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever. Amen

Introit

Deliver me from my enemies, | O LORD!* I have fled to you for | refuge! Hear my prayer,
O LORD; give ear to my pleas for | mercy!* In your faithfulness answer me, in your |
righteousness! Enter not into judgment with your | servant,* for no one living is righteous be- |
fore you. 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. Deliver me from my enemies, | O LORD!* I have
fled to you for | refuge!

Reading

Old Testament/Genesis 50:15–21. Epistle/Romans 14:1–12. Gospel/Matthew 18:21–35

Forgiving as the Lord Forgives Us

- Though we daily sin against each other, the Lord intends “to bring it about that many people should be kept alive” (Gen. 50:20). Jesus speaks kindly by His Gospel and promises: “I will provide for you and your little ones” (Gen. 50:21).
- In settling His accounts with us, our Lord acts not with anger, but with compassion. He does not imprison us as we deserve, but He forgives all our debts and releases us (Matt. 18:23–27). Therefore, our Lord bids each of us to have “mercy on your fellow servant” and “forgive your brother from your heart” (Matt. 18:33, 35). By the Lord’s forgiveness of our sins, we are free to forgive those who sin against us, because He has been handed over to the jailers in our stead and He has paid our entire debt with His lifeblood.
- Whether we live or die, we “are the Lord’s” (Rom. 14:8). Since we all will “stand before the judgment seat of God,” we are not to despise our brother (Rom. 14:10), but gladly forgive him. By the grace of God, our brother also “will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand” (Rom. 14:4).

Stewardship

Romans 14:7 – “For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself.”

We just don’t belong to ourselves. We belong first of all to God, and, through Him, we belong to our neighbors. We are here to serve God in our service to one another.

God has called you to this service through your vocation. As a Christian, you serve others in the church; as a neighbor, you serve others in society; and as a son or daughter, husband or wife, father or mother, you serve your family.

Sermon Notes

+ Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost +

The Absolute Necessity of Forgiveness. Matthew 18:21-22.

At that point Peter got up the nerve to ask, "Master, how many times do I forgive a brother or sister who hurts me? Seven?" Jesus replied, "Seven! Hardly. Try seventy times seven."

The absolute necessity of forgiveness points to the new reality of God's kingdom in which the unpardonable offense is pardoned, the unpayable debt is deleted and our hard, cold, calculating hearts are transformed by the warm, generous embrace of God's mercy.

1. In God's kingdom, unpardonable offenses are pardoned

- a. Outside are only retaliation, revenge and anger
- b. God invites us to forsake the rebellion of sin and death

2. In God's kingdom, unpayable debts are deleted

- a. Some debts are too great to ever be repaid
- b. The only hope is for someone else to absorb and thus erase, delete and cancel our debt

3. In God's kingdom hearts of stone are transformed by mercy

- a. By nature, we all have cold, hard, calculating hearts
- b. By grace, we are changed by the warm, generous embrace of God's mercy

Discipleship Leading to Evangelism

Be of good courage, my friends, your sins are forgiven, your lives firmly planted in the soil of grace, your hopes secure in the arms of our crucified and risen Savior. So shine, like the stars you are. Shine as the courageous in the face of persecution, fear, and uncertainty. Shine as the courageous in Christ, whose victory we hold on to when everything else is gone.

Shine not with your light but Christ's... not for your glory, but His... not for others to see you, but to see Christ who lives in you... What do stars do? They shine!

Shine in the fellowship of the Church, where our individual lights come together to form a giant beacon of light together. Shine in the fellowship of the redeemed who bear one another's burdens, who love one another even with our failures and failings, who forgive one another not because we deserve it but because Christ forgave us, who bury every bitterness at the foot of the cross and who dig up a harvest of treasure in the life which never ends.

Don't wait for your life to be perfect to shine... don't wait until you become fully the person God has called you to be to shine... don't wait for all the tears to be over or and aches of this mortal life to disappear before you shine. Shine NOW as the stars you are by baptism and faith. ...there shall be a time of trouble, such as never has been... but fear not...your people shall be delivered, everyone whose name shall be found written in the book. And all those who are wise in faith shall shine like the stars in the sky above; and their light shall turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever. What do stars do? They shine... so people of God... stars who have been made to shine with Christ's light... it is time to glitter and shine to your family, your neighbors, your co-workers, your community and the strangers you meet... shine with Christ's light. It is what stars do.

pastoralmeandering.org. Nov.15, 2009

Prayer of the Church. 15th Sunday after Pentecost. 13 September 2020

Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

Almighty God, as once You kept Joseph from evil and brought good from his suffering in Egypt, deliver us by Your grace so that we may learn patience in trials. Teach us to be slow to judge, quick to forgive, and steadfast in love for You and for one another. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Merciful Lord, You have shown great compassion to us; teach us to show such compassion to others, that we may welcome the stranger, love our neighbor in need, and be attentive to those new to the faith or vulnerable to temptation. Help us to serve the refugee seeking safety, and give us opportunity to share Your gifts with those who live in poverty and want. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Gracious God, bless those who preach and teach Your Word, and give the hearers willing ears to hear and willing hearts to learn the Scriptures well. Bless those now training to be pastors and church workers. Grant to all the baptized the aid of Your Holy Spirit so that, receiving Your Gospel with joy, we may share it freely with those outside the household of faith. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Mighty God, give wisdom and courage to our elected and appointed leaders, that they may pursue justice, seek peace and protect life from its natural beginning to its natural end. Bring an end to the threats of terror and violence among the peoples, and open all nations to the voice of Your Word. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Holy Lord, lead us to pursue reconciliation, that we may stand before You forgiven and united in faith. Give us unity of doctrine, and help us to walk together in harmony of life. Prepare us to receive Your own Son's body and blood with faith, and bring to fruition in our lives the precious gift of grace we receive in this communion. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Blessed Father, You know our weakness of body and soul. Give to the troubled in mind Your peace, to the suffering relief, to the sick healing, to the grieving comfort and deliver the dying into everlasting life. Hear us especially for _____ and also for those named in our hearts. *[Brief silence]* Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Giving Lord, all good things come from You. Open our hearts to be generous with the poor and to bring You the tithes and offerings You are due, that Your Church and all her agencies may serve Your gracious purpose and suffer no lack of people or resources to do the work of Your Kingdom. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Almighty and everlasting God, deliver us from temptation and the powers of evil, that we may be faithful unto death and receive from Your hand the crown of everlasting life. Whether we live or die, we belong to You, and we pray You to comfort us with this promise, that we may join the company of the saints on the day You have appointed and enter into the heavenly places to worship at Your throne on high; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forevermore. **Amen.**