



“³²Then his lord summoned him and said to him...I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?”

~Matthew 18:32-33

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church
Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost – September 17, 2017

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Rev. Robert Zimmerman, Pastor

Matt Claus, Pianist

*We welcome you to St. John Lutheran Church. We are delighted to have you worship with us this morning. Should you have no permanent church-home in this community, why not consider making this one your own? You are most welcome here at St. John! Most elements of our service can be found in the bulletin, everything else is in the hymnal. Page refers to the numbered pages towards the front of the hymnal, hymns are bold and towards the back. Please rise when there is an *, congregational responses are in **bold**, and underlined elements of the service are found in the hymnal.*

HOLY COMMUNION

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost – September 17, 2017

In today's second reading Paul questions why we judge one another, since we all stand before the judgment of God. Yet we do sin against one another, and Jesus' challenge that we forgive seventy-seven times reveals God's boundless mercy. When we hear the words of forgiveness in worship and sign ourselves with the cross, we are renewed in baptism to be signs of reconciliation in the world.

*Today we commemorate **Hildegard, Abbess of Bingen, died 1179**. A mystic who was widely influential within the church, Hildegard advised and reprovved kings and popes, wrote poems and hymns, and produced treatises in medicine, theology, and natural history. She was also a musician and artist.*

PRELUDE: *Sweet Hour of Prayer* – Joel Raney

ANNOUNCEMENTS

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the † holy Trinity, the one who fashions us, the one who heals us, the one who reforms us again and again.
Amen.

Let us confess our sin, calling for God's transforming power.

Source of all life,

**We confess that we have not allowed
your grace to set us free.**

We fear that we are not good enough.

**We hear your word of love freely given to us,
yet we expect others to earn it.**

**We turn the church inward,
rather than moving it outward.**

Forgive us. Stir us.

**Reform us to be a church powered by love,
willing to speak for what is right,
act for what is just,
and seek the healing of your whole creation.**

Amen.

God hears our cry and sends the Spirit to change us
and to empower our lives in the world.

Our sins are forgiven,

† God's love is unconditional,

and we are raised up as God's people
who will always be made new,

in the name of Jesus Christ.

Amen.

***GATHERING HYMN #835: All Creatures, Worship God Most High!**

***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.**

***GLORY TO GOD**

Glo - ry to God in the high -
est, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.
Lord God, heav - en - ly King, al - might - y God and
Fa - ther, we wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we
praise you for your glo - ry. Lord Je - sus
Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther,
Lord God, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world: have mer - cy on us; you are seat - ed at the
right hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.
For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a -
lone are the Lord, you a - lone are the Most High,
Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it, in the glo - ry of
God the Fa - ther. A - men.
Glo - ry to God in the high -
est, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.

*PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

**O Lord God, merciful judge,
you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness.
Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you,
that we may delight in doing your will,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.**

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Genesis 50: 15-21

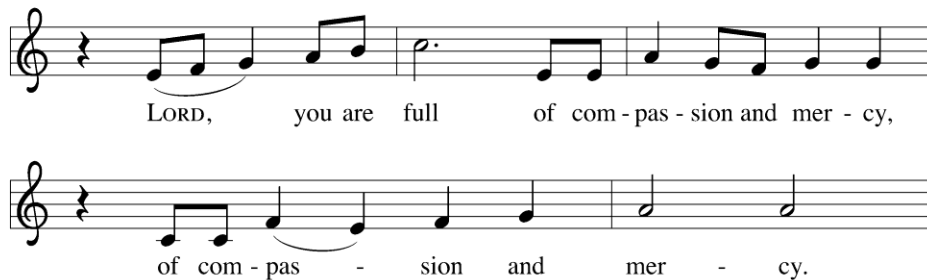
After Jacob's death, the brothers of Joseph begged for forgiveness for the crime they had done against him. You intended to do me harm, Joseph said, but God used this as an opportunity to do good and save many lives.

¹⁵Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" ¹⁶So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, ¹⁷'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." ¹⁹But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. ²¹So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 103



- ⁸LORD, you are full of compas- | sion and mercy,
slow to anger and abounding in | steadfast love;
- ⁹**you will not al- | ways accuse us,
nor will you keep your an- | ger forever.**
- ¹⁰You have not dealt with us according | to our sins,
nor repaid us according to | our iniquities.
- ¹¹**For as the heavens are high a- | bove the earth,
so great is your steadfast love for | those who fear you.**
- ¹²As far as the east is | from the west,
so far have you removed our transgres- | sions from us.
- ¹³**As a father has compassion | for his children,
so you have compassion for those who fear | you, O LORD. R**

SECOND READING: Romans 14:1 -12

This Christian community has significant struggles with diversity. Here Paul helps us understand that despite different practices in worship and personal piety, we do not judge one another. All Christians belong to the Lord Jesus Christ who died for all of us and will judge each of us.

¹Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. ²Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. ⁴Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

⁵Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. ⁶Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God.

⁷We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

¹⁰Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹For it is written,

“As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall give praise to God.”

¹²So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,
al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.
Repeat alleluia

Cantor: Alleluia. We have an advocate, Jesus Christ the righteous; your sins are forgiven on account of his name.

Alleluia. (1 John 2:1, 12)

***GOSPEL READING: Matthew 18: 21-35**

When Peter asks about the limits of forgiveness, Jesus responds with a parable that suggests human forgiveness should mirror the unlimited mercy of God.

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

²¹Peter came and said to [Jesus], “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” ²²Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

²³“For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; ²⁵and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made.

²⁶So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ ²⁷And out of

pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' ²⁹Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' ³⁰But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³²Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

The gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY #606: *Our Father, We Have Wandered

CREED

**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

Open to the gifts of the Holy Spirit, we pray for the church, the world, and all of God's creation.

Good and gracious God, we pray for the church. Bless the ministries of congregations in our community. Unite us in the proclamation of your life-giving gospel. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Creator God, you spoke light into being, you separated the waters, you formed the dry land. Protect and enliven the creation you so love, and make us willing partners in its care. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of the nations, you love all tribes, peoples, and languages. We pray for all who govern. Give them wise and generous hearts for those they serve. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Divine Healer, calm the anxiety of those who are wrongly accused, who suffer under crushing debt, or who are in prison. Reassure those who are lonely, impatient, brokenhearted, homebound, hospitalized, or ill, especially Jeff, Jim, Dan, Bill, Raymond, Francis & Grace, David & Ellen, those on our prayer list, and all whom we remember aloud or in our hearts. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for this assembly; for our guests and visitors, for newcomers to this community, for those who are certain and those who doubt, and for all who seek you in this place. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For those in the path of storms and wildfires. Be present with those who try to make sense of their lives in the midst of destruction and debris. Grant shelter to all who have nowhere to go. Provide strength and safety to all first responders and aid workers. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We remember and give thanks for the faithful of every age who did not live to themselves but lived to you especially Hildegard, Abbess of Bingen. Raise us with them on the last day. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting the power of Christ and the gifts of the Spirit. **Amen.**

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING

OFFERING HYMN #359: *Where Charity and Love Prevail

All stand for the final stanza as the gifts are brought forward.

***OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray,
God of life,
you give us these gifts of the earth,
these resources of our life and our labor.
Take them, offered in great thanksgiving,
and use them to set a table that will heal the whole creation;
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Light. **Amen.**

***GREAT THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

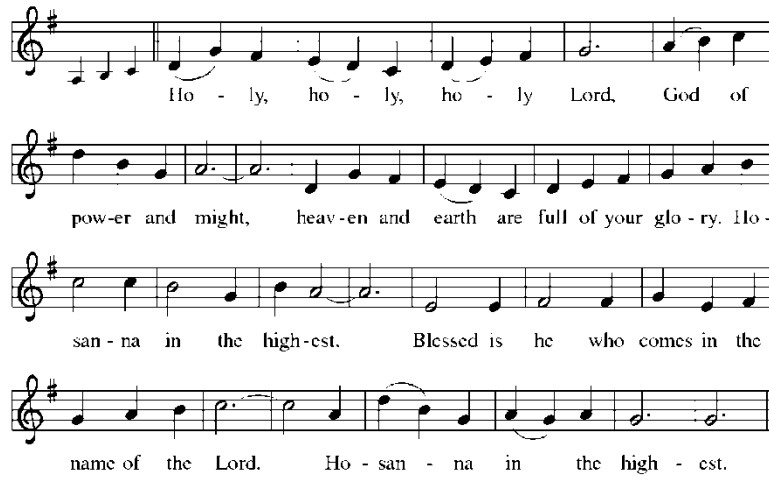
Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ;
who on this day overcame death and the grave,
and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Holy God,

Our bread of Life, our Table, and our Food,
you created a world in which all might be satisfied by your abundance.

You dined with Abraham and Sarah, promising them life,
and fed your people Israel with manna from heaven.

You sent your Son to eat with sinners
and to become food for the world.

In 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 in remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it to 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 in remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore,
His life given for us
and his rising from the grave,
we await his coming again to share with us the everlasting feast.

By your Spirit nurture and sustain us with this meal:
strengthen us to serve all in hunger and want,
and by this bread and cup make of us the body of your Son.

Through him all glory and honor is yours,
Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,
in your holy church,
both now and forever.

Amen.

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach 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**

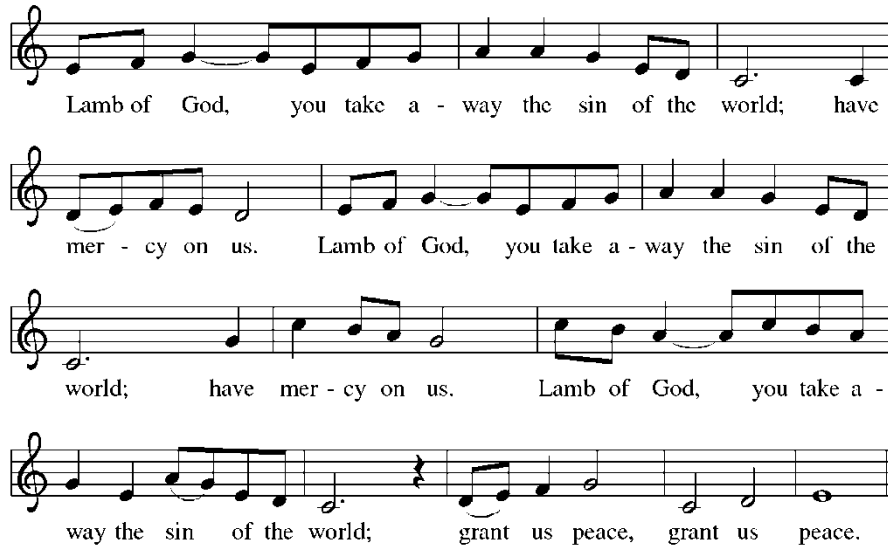
***INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Speak to us, O Lord, in the breaking of the bread,
and make us one with you.

COMMUNION

The body of Christ, given for you.
The blood of Christ, shed for you. **Amen.**

COMMUNION SONG: *Lamb of God*



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a -
way the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION HYMN #482: *I Come with Joy*

***POST-COMMUNION BLESSING**

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in grace.
Amen.

***POST-COMMUNION PRAYER**

Let us pray.
Holy and compassionate God,
in bread and wine you give us gifts
that form us to be humble and courageous.
May your words come to life
in our serving and in our witness,
that we might speak a living voice
of healing and justice to all the world,
through Jesus Christ, our rock and our redeemer.
Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends in mission to the world.

*BLESSING

God, creator of all things, speaking reformation into being;
Jesus Christ, savior of the world, raising the dead;
Holy Spirit, living voice, calling and enlightening the church:
Almighty God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you now and forever.
Amen.

*SENDING SONG #543: *Go, My Children, with My Blessing*

*DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Sound the good news.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE: *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross* – Lowell Mason

8:00 am

Assisting Minister: Clarence Strabel
Communion Assistant: Ruth Ann Tully
Acolyte:
Lector:
Usher: Robert Dishong
Attendance Last Week: 58
Weekly Budgeted Expense: \$ 3,185.02
YTD Budgeted Expenses: \$ 114,660.65
YTD Actual Expense: \$ 114,479.97

10:30 am

Assisting Minister: Martha Ward
Communion Assistant: James Ward
Acolyte:
Lector:
Usher: Jamie Weaver
Attendance Last Year: 49
Last Week's General Giving: \$ 3,433.84
Last Week's Designated Giving: \$ 872.54
YTD Receipts: \$ 112,877.69

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