



Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church – 1125 Mahoning Street, Milton, PA 17847 – 570-742-7473
Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church – 100 Mahoning Street, Milton, PA 17847 – 570-742-4601

Milton Lutheran Parish

Gary Schaeffer, Pastor

Dear Friends of the Milton Lutheran Parish:

Our Gospel text (Matthew 22:15-22) is an interesting one! Especially given that we are less than a month away from a presidential election, and election that experts say will be historic.

The Pharisees wanted to trick Jesus into saying something that would get him in trouble, so they sent the disciples and Herodians to him and ask about whether or not they should pay taxes to the emperor.

This isn't just any tax. It's the Imperial Tax, the one denarius a year that Jews had to pay the Romans to cover the cost of occupying their country. Ultimately, they were paying a tax to their oppressor, so that their oppressor could continue to oppress them.

And so, Jesus calls them out on this hypocrisy and reminds them that they are not supposed to be confused over who they are paying taxes to. They are paying taxes to the emperor and not God. He tells them "give, therefore, to Caesar, the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." And suddenly the tables are turned. Jesus' accusers are reminded that their ultimate allegiance is not to the emperor, but to God.

I wonder if Jesus is doing the same to us?

Jesus is inviting us to declare our allegiance, not to any political party or system, but to the God of grace and glory. Of course, as Christians we are called to be a part of this world, to support our elected officials, to be mindful of the decisions we make, the stances we take. But ultimately our faith in God is what matters most. How we choose to act, how we choose to treat one another, how we forgive, love, and follow Jesus; all of it with God and for God.

So as we prepare ourselves to vote in this upcoming election, as we talk with our family and friends, as we gather together as a community of faith let us remember to give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's.

Many Blessings to you,
Gary



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<https://miltonlutheranparish.faith/>

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Sunday, October 18, 2020, Worship Bulletin Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost Milton Lutheran Parish- Milton, PA

Welcome to Parking Lot Worship Today!

As we gather for worship, here are some procedures and guidelines for our time together:

1. Tune in your car to FM 87.9 for the audio of the service.
2. For communion we will begin with a word of prayer and the blessing of the elements, followed by an invitation to take communion.
3. You are welcome to sing the hymns if you remain in your car. If you are outside, we ask that you refrain from singing unless you are a minimum of 25 feet from others.
4. The ushers will collect offering before and after the service at the entrances and exits of the parking lot.

Welcome and Announcements

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Sovereign God, raise your throne in our hearts. Created by you, let us live in your image; created for you, let us act for your glory; redeemed by you, let us give you what is yours, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Opening Hymn: # 831- "The God of Abraham Praise"

1 The God of Abr'ham praise,
who reigns enthroned above;
Ancient of everlasting days,
and God of love--
"I Am the One I Am"--
by earth and heav'n confessed;
I bow and bless the sacred name
forever blest.

8 The whole triumphant host
give thanks to God on high.
"Hail, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!"
they ever cry.
Hail, Abr'ham's God and mine!
I join the heav'nly lays:
to you be glory, might divine,
and endless praise!

Confession and Forgiveness

P- Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who creates, redeems, and sustains us and all of creation.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

C- 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.

First Reading: Isaiah 45:1-7

¹Thus says the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped to subdue nations before him and strip kings of their robes, to open doors before him— and the gates shall not be closed: ²I will go before you and level the mountains, I will break in pieces the doors of bronze and cut through the bars of iron, ³I will give you the treasures of darkness and riches hidden in secret places, so that you may know that it is I, the LORD, the God of Israel, who call you by your name. ⁴For the sake of my servant Jacob, and Israel my chosen, I call you by your name, I surname you, though you do not know me. ⁵I am the LORD, and there is no other; besides me there is no god. I arm you, though you do not know me, ⁶so that they may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is no one besides me; I am the LORD, and there is no other. ⁷I form light and create darkness, I make weal and create woe; I the LORD do all these things.

Psalm: Psalm 96:1-13(read responsively)

¹Sing to the LORD a new song;
sing to the LORD, all the earth.
²**Sing to the LORD, bless the name of the LORD;
proclaim God's salvation from day to day.**
³Declare God's glory among the nations
and God's wonders among all peoples.
⁴**For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised,
more to be feared than all gods.**
⁵As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols;
but you, O LORD, have made the heavens.
⁶**Majesty and magnificence are in your presence;
power and splendor are in your sanctuary.**
⁷Ascribe to the LORD, you families of the peoples,
ascribe to the LORD honor and power.
⁸**Ascribe to the LORD the honor due the holy name;
bring offerings and enter the courts of the LORD. R**
⁹Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness;
tremble before the LORD, all the earth.
¹⁰**Tell it out among the nations: "The LORD is king!
The one who made the world so firm that it cannot be moved will judge the peoples with equity."**
¹¹Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;
let the sea thunder and all that is in it; let the field be joyful and all that is therein.
¹²**Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy at your coming, O LORD,
for you come to judge the earth.**

¹³You will judge the world with righteousness
and the peoples with your truth.

Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

¹Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:
Grace to you and peace.

²We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers,
constantly ³remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and
steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴For we know, brothers and sisters beloved by God,
that he has chosen you, ⁵because our message of the gospel came to you not in word only, but also
in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of persons we
proved to be among you for your sake. ⁶And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite
of persecution you received the word with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit, ⁷so that you became an
example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. ⁸For the word of the Lord has sounded forth
from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith in God has become known,
so that we have no need to speak about it. ⁹For the people of those regions report about us what kind
of welcome we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true
God, ¹⁰and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us
from the wrath that is coming.

Gospel: Matthew 22:15-22

¹⁵Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap Jesus in what he said. ¹⁶So they sent their disciples
to him, along with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way
of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with
partiality. ¹⁷Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?” ¹⁸But Jesus,
aware of their malice, said, “Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? ¹⁹Show me the coin
used for the tax.” And they brought him a denarius. ²⁰Then he said to them, “Whose head is this, and
whose title?” ²¹They answered, “The emperor’s.” Then he said to them, “Give therefore to the
emperor the things that are the emperor’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” ²²When they heard
this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.

Sermon

Hymn: #841-“Lift Every Voice and Sing”

1 Lift ev'ry voice and sing till earth and heaven ring,
ring with the harmonies of liberty.
Let our rejoicing rise high as the list'ning skies,
let it resound loud as the rolling sea.
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us;
sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;
facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
let us march on till victory is won.

3 God of our weary years, God of our silent tears,
thou who hast brought us thus far on the way;
thou who hast by thy might led us into the light,
keep us forever in the path, we pray.
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met thee;
lest, our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we forget thee;
shadowed beneath thy hand may we forever stand,
true to our God, true to our native land.

Apostles Creed

Let us confess our faith in the words of the Apostles 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

With confidence in God's grace and mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence.

Gracious God, you call us by name and invite us to share your good news. Send your Holy Spirit among preachers, missionaries, and evangelists. We give thanks for the witness of your servant Luke, the evangelist, whom the church commemorates today. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

God of praise, the heavens and all creation declare your salvation. From the rising of the sun to its setting, may the whole universe show forth your goodness. Raise up devoted stewards of all that you have made. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

God of all, may your word of justice sound forth in every place. Restore divided nations and communities with reconciling truth. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

God of light, we pray for those living with pain, illness, isolation, grief, anger, or doubt. And who else and what else shall the people of Milton Lutheran Parish pray for. Join their voices in a new song, assuring them that you call them each by name. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

God of truth, you show no partiality. May your spirit guide the work of justices, magistrates, court officials, and all vocations of the law, that your promise of restoration may be known. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Living God, as you raised Jesus from the dead, so raise up those who have died in you. We give thanks for their witness, confident of your rescuing welcome for all. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Listen as we call on you, O God, and enfold in your loving arms all for whom we pray, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Lord's Prayer

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.

Communion

Blessing

Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers,
nor things present, nor things to come,
nor powers, nor height, nor depth,
nor anything else in all creation,
will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

God, the creator, † Jesus, the Christ,
and the Holy Spirit, the comforter,
bless you and keep you in eternal love.

Amen.

Closing Hymn: #825 "You Servants of God"

1 You servants of God, your Master proclaim,
and publish abroad his wonderful name;
the name, all-victorious, of Jesus extol;
his kingdom is glorious and rules over all!

4 Then let us adore and give him his right,
all glory and pow'r and wisdom and might,
all honor and blessing, with angels above,
and thanks never ceasing, and infinite love!

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Christ is with you.

C: Thanks be to God.

Weekly Devotional- October 12-October 18

Introduction

In today's first reading God uses the Gentile ruler Cyrus to accomplish divine purposes. When the Pharisees try to trap Jesus, he tells them to give the emperor what belongs to him and to God what belongs to God. To gather for worship reminds us that our ultimate allegiance is to God rather than to any earthly authority.

Prayer of the Day

Sovereign God, raise your throne in our hearts. Created by you, let us live in your image; created for you, let us act for your glory; redeemed by you, let us give you what is yours, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**



Readings and Psalm

Isaiah 45:1-7

An earthly ruler as the instrument of God's will

Psalm 96:1-13

Ascribe to the LORD honor and power

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

Thanksgiving for the church at Thessalonica

Matthew 22:15-22

A teaching on giving to the emperor and to God

Questions:

1. *Why are the Pharisees trying to trap Jesus?*
2. *Make a list of the top ten things God has given to you. How do you respond to God's gifts given to you?*
3. *Why is it so difficult to give to God what is God's?*
4. *What is the greatest challenge in being a Christian citizen?*

Lord's Prayer

Bless one another saying: May God bless you this week and always. AMEN

Resources:

Opening prayer: Sundaysandseasons.com
Questions for discussion: workingpreacher.com