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# Saint James Lutheran Church



A Parish of the North Carolina Synod of the  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



"Growing in Christ Through Worship, Learning, Fellowship, and Service"

## SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST SEPTEMBER 20, 2020



**M**atthew narrates one of Jesus' controversial parables in which Jesus says that the reign of God is like that of a landowner who pays his workers the same wage no matter what time of day they began to work. When God changes God's mind about punishing Nineveh for their evil ways, Jonah is angry. Yet God is gracious and merciful, abounding in steadfast love. In baptism we receive the grace of God that is freely given to all. As Martin Luther wrote, in the presence of God's mercy we are all beggars.

### WELCOME

### CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

**Amen.**

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

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

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.**

### 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.**

### PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Almighty and eternal God, you show perpetual lovingkindness to us your servants. Because we cannot rely on our own abilities, grant us your merciful judgment, and train us to embody the generosity of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

**FIRST READING: *Jonah 3:10—4:11***

*After Jonah's short sermon in 3:4, the Ninevites all repented and God decided to spare the city. Jonah objected to this and became even more angry when God ordered a worm to destroy a plant that was providing shade. The book ends with a question that challenges any who are not ready to forgive: You, Jonah, are all worked up about a bush, but shouldn't I be concerned about a hundred and twenty thousand Ninevites?*

A reading from Jonah, the third chapter.

**W**hen God saw what [the people of Ninevah] 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. <sup>4</sup><sup>1</sup>But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. <sup>2</sup>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. <sup>3</sup>And now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live." <sup>4</sup>And the Lord said, "Is it right for you to be angry?" <sup>5</sup>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. <sup>6</sup>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. <sup>7</sup>But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. <sup>8</sup>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." <sup>9</sup>But God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?" And he said, "Yes, angry enough to die." <sup>10</sup>Then the Lord said, "You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. <sup>11</sup>And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also many animals?"

The Word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM: *Psalms 145:1-8***

*The Lord is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. (Ps. 145:8)*

A reading from Psalm one hundred forty-five.

<sup>1</sup>I will exalt you, my God and king,  
 and bless your name forever and ever.  
<sup>2</sup>Every day will I bless you  
 and praise your name forever and ever.  
<sup>3</sup>Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised!  
 There is no end to your greatness.  
<sup>4</sup>One generation shall praise your works to another  
 and shall declare your power.  
<sup>5</sup>I will speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty  
 and all your marvelous works.  
<sup>6</sup>They shall tell of the might of your wondrous acts,  
 and I will recount your greatness.  
<sup>7</sup>They shall publish the remembrance of your great goodness;  
 they shall sing joyfully of your righteousness.  
<sup>8</sup>The LORD is gracious and full of compassion,  
 slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

The Word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

## SECOND READING: *Philippians 1:21-30*

*Paul writes to the Philippians from prison. Though he is uncertain about the outcome of his imprisonment, he is committed to the ministry of the gospel and calls on the Philippians to live lives that reflect and enhance the gospel mission.*

A reading from Philippians, the first chapter.

**F**or to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. <sup>22</sup>If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which I prefer. <sup>23</sup>I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; <sup>24</sup>but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. <sup>25</sup>Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, <sup>26</sup>so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again. <sup>27</sup>Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, <sup>28</sup>and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. <sup>29</sup>For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well—<sup>30</sup>since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## HOLY GOSPEL *Matthew 20:1-16*

*Jesus tells a parable about God's generosity, challenging the common assumption that God rewards people according to what they have earned or deserve.*

The Holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew, the twentieth chapter.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

**J**esus said to the disciples: <sup>1</sup>“The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. <sup>2</sup>After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. <sup>3</sup>When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; <sup>4</sup>and he said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.’ So they went. <sup>5</sup>When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. <sup>6</sup>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?’ <sup>7</sup>They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard.’ <sup>8</sup>When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, ‘Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.’ <sup>9</sup>When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. <sup>10</sup>Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. <sup>11</sup>And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, <sup>12</sup>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.’ <sup>13</sup>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? <sup>14</sup>Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. <sup>15</sup>Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?’ <sup>16</sup>So the last will be first, and the first will be last.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## SERMON

HYMN

*Great is Thy Faithfulness*  
*Nancy Sloop, Organist / Beth Downs, vocalist*



1 Great is thy faith - ful - ness, O God my Fa - ther; there is no  
2 Sum - mer and win - ter and spring - time and har - vest, sun, moon, and  
3 Par - don for sin and a peace that en - dur - eth, thine own dear



shad - ow of turn - ing with thee; thou chang - est not, thy com -  
stars in their cours - es a - bove join with all na - ture in  
pres - ence to cheer and to guide; strength for to - day and bright



pas - sions they fail not; as thou hast been, thou for - ev - er wilt be.  
man - i - fold wit - ness to thy great faith - ful - ness, mer - cy, and love.  
hope for to - mor - row, bless - ings all mine, with ten thou - sand be - side!

*Refrain*



Great is thy faith - ful - ness! Great is thy faith - ful - ness! Morn - ing by



morn - ing new mer - cies I see; all I have need - ed thy



hand hath pro - vid - ed; great is thy faith - ful - ness, Lord, un - to me.

## APOSTLES' CREED

God has made us his people through our Baptism into Christ. Living together in trust and hope, we profess our faith.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.**

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary,**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.**

**He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again.**

**He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again 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 THE PEOPLE

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.**

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. Give us a spirit of generosity toward all you have made. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

Where we find envy and create enemies, you provide enough for all. 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.**

Reveal yourself to all in need as you are gracious and merciful, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, ready to relent from punishing. Accompany judges and lawyers, victims of crime and those serving sentences. Give fruitful labor and a livelihood to those seeking work. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

Even beyond our expectations, you choose to give generously. Grant life, health, and courage to coronavirus patients and their doctors and nurses. Protect students and their teachers, police and peaceful demonstrators, firefighters and those whose lives and homes are in danger, those in the way of impending storms, and all in need of your grace. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

We praise you for the generations that have declared your power to us. Give us faithfulness to follow them, living for Christ, until you call us to join them in the joyful song around his throne. 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.**

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

And now as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold 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.**

## **BLESSING**

Almighty God, Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit bless you and lead you into the way of truth and life.

**Amen.**

## **DISMISSAL**

God in peace, to love and serve the Lord!

**Thanks be to God!**

## **POSTLUDE**

Amazing Grace

NEW BRITAIN

*The Liturgy Has Ended; The Service Begins!*

# WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please e-mail all information to the church office at keith@sjnc.net

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CHURCH OFFICE 704.786.0166  
WEBSITE www.sjnc.net

## PRAYER LIST

**Terri Fleck**

All health care professionals and first responders including:

**Deb Bradshaw**

**Lauri Fowler**

**DeeDee Gilbert**

**Annette Propst**

**Meagan Lambert**

**Alison Monk**

**Jason and Stephanie Matthews**

**Dr Bradley Propst, son of**

*Kenny and Annette Propst*

**Sam Hurley, son of Elizabeth**

*Hurley*

**Lisa Snyder, friend of Debbie**

*Wilkinson*

**Julie Greathouse, friend of**

*Lois Marlow*

**Betsy Waselovich, sister of**

*Golda Jay*

**Lauren, daughter of Angie**

*Buchanan*

**Dr. Stephanie Garrison,**

daughter-in-law of Margaret Garrison

**Dr. Kevin Burns, son-in-law of**  
Margaret Garrison.

*If you have someone you would like to add to the prayer list, please contact Keith. 704-786-0166 and leave a message or email at keith@sjnc.net*

## BIRTHDAYS THIS WEEK

**20-Sept** Peter Muniz

**20-Sept** Cameron Trott

**20-Sept** Carson Trott

**22-Sept** John Patterson

**22-Sept** Patricia Propst

**23-Sept** Annette Propst

**24-Sept** Lois Marlow

**24-Sept** Andy Yoos

## OUR STEWARDSHIP

**Contributions and Receipts  
for September 6 & 13, 2020  
\$10,282.00**

*(\$8,414.00 needed for weekly)*

## ASSISTING IN TODAY'S WORSHIP

**Lector/Intercessor:**

Michael Bestler

## SALVATION ARMY MEALS

St. James will be providing meals to the Salvation Army Center of Hope the week of September 20 - 26. The meal would be for 25-30 clients. Volunteers should arrive by 6:30 p.m. with meal prepared or if ordered, to be delivered at that time. The meals will only need to be dropped off and the staff will serve the meals. You can contact either Juanita Fitts or Keith Sutton in the Church Office. It is important to let us know so that we do not have duplicate meals.

## EMAIL SCAMS

Have you recently received requests from Pastor Tony asking you to buy gift cards or call quickly? Rest assured, those emails are NOT coming from him. His account has not been hacked, rather, his account is being spoofed. (Emails look like they're coming from him but they're not.) Pastor Tony **will not** email you asking you to purchase gift cards or send money! So please don't reply to these emails. **When in doubt, call the church office: 704-786-0166.**

## COMMUNION SERVICE

Next Wednesday, September 23 at our Drive-In Worship service, we will be celebrating Holy Communion. More details to follow.

**Join Saint James Lutheran Church Facebook and Instagram groups**—send Jeremy Jay any pictures and/or articles you would like to have posted at [jeremy@pbnjay.com](mailto:jeremy@pbnjay.com)

**St. James YouTube Channel**  
Search for St. James Lutheran Church Concord NC and subscribe.

## DIRECTORY

Members of Saint James.....Ministers  
The Rev. Elizabeth Eaton...Presiding Bishop  
The Rev. Dr. Timothy M. Smith.....Bishop

## SAINT JAMES STAFF

The Rev. Tony Bradshaw.....Senior Pastor  
[tony@sjnc.net](mailto:tony@sjnc.net)

Jill Irvin.....Finance Administrator  
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Mike Holt.....Youth and Family  
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Keith Sutton.....Parish Administrator  
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Cindy Cruse.....Hospitality Director  
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Kathryn Radcliffe.....Nursery Coordinator  
[krad3700@gmail.com](mailto:krad3700@gmail.com)

## CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL

**Kenny Propst.....President**  
**Joseph Beasley.....Vice President**  
**Golda Jay.....Secretary**  
**Beth Huss.....Treasurer**

Ann Blackwelder  
Samantha Hillegass  
Elizabeth Hurley  
Hunter Huss  
Nick Lovelace  
Mac Mullins  
Mark Murphy  
Al Pieschel  
Jodi Ramirez



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## OFFICE HOURS

**M-Th 8:30-4:00, F 8:30-1:00**  
*Closed for lunch 12:30 - 1:00*